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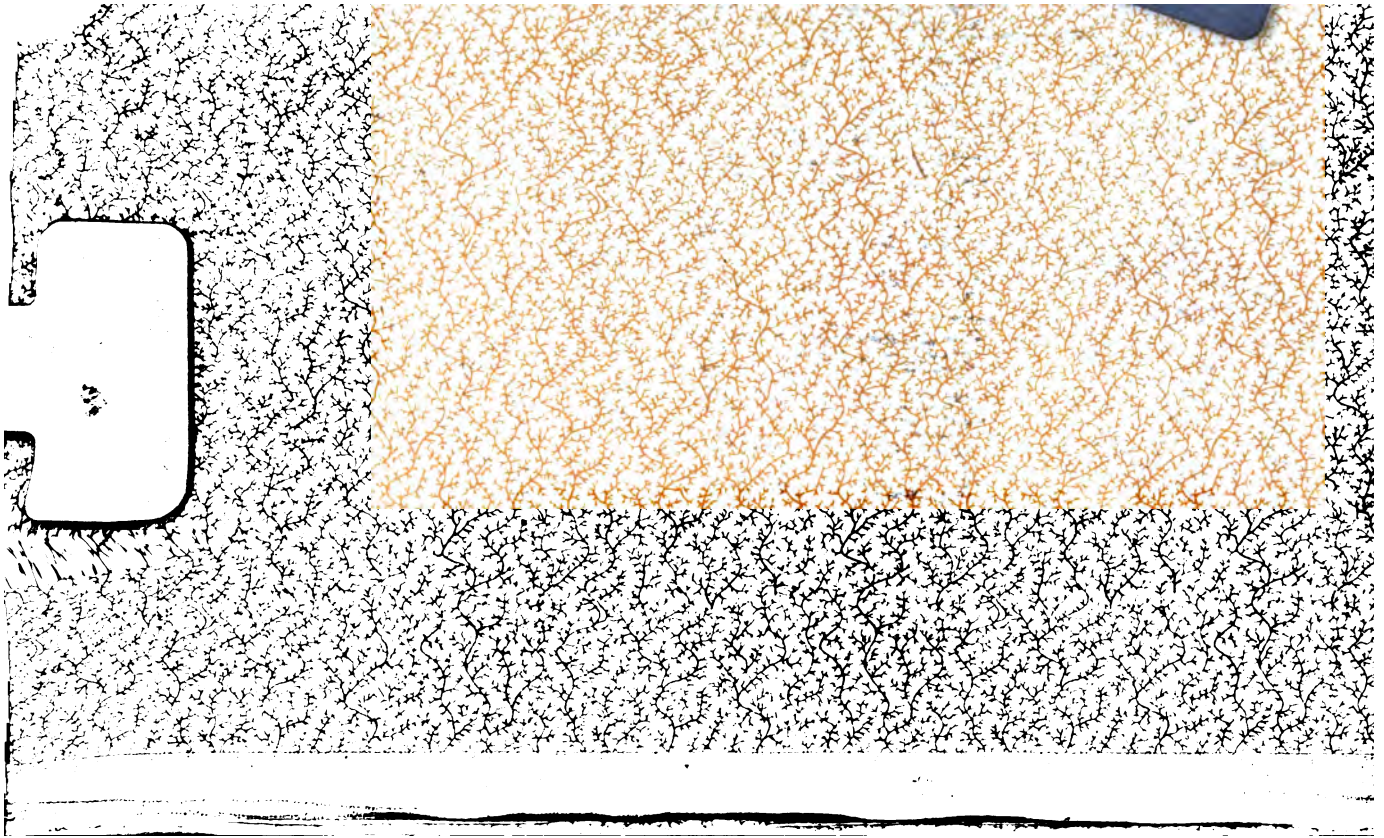

NATURAL RELIGION

MAX MÜLLER

Oxford

HORACE HART, PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY

NATURAL RELIGION

The Gifford Lectures

DELIVERED

BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

IN 1888

BY

F. MAX MÜLLER, K.M.

FOREIGN MEMBER OF THE FRENCH INSTITUTE

SECOND EDITION (THIRD THOUSAND)

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PREFACE.

WHEN I had delivered my first course of Gifford Lectures in the University of Glasgow, I was asked by my friends to publish them exactly as I had delivered them, and not to delay their publication by trying to make them more complete. I have followed their advice, and I now present these lectures to the public at large, if not exactly as I delivered them, at least as I had prepared them for delivery. I was under the impression that, according to Lord Gifford's Will, each course was to consist of not less than twenty lectures. I therefore allowed myself that number for my introductory course, and I confess I found even that number barely sufficient for what I had chosen as my subject, namely,

(1) *The definition of Natural Religion*,

(2) *The proper method of its treatment*, and

(3) *The materials available for its study*.

In order to discuss these preliminary questions with any approach to systematic completeness, I could not avoid touching on subjects which I had discussed in some of my former publications, such as 'The Science of Language,' 'The Science of Thought,' and 'The Hibbert Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion.' I might have left out what to some of my readers will seem to be mere repetition, but I could not have done so without spoiling

the whole plan of my lectures. Nor would it have seemed respectful either to my audience or to my critics if, in reiterating some of my statements and opinions, I had not endeavoured, to the best of my power, to vindicate their truth and to answer any *bonâ fide* objections which have been raised against them during the last years.

No one can be more conscious than myself of the magnitude of the task with which the University of Glasgow has entrusted me, and of my own inadequateness to perform it as it ought to be performed. This first course of lectures is but a small contribution towards an immense subject, and it is such as from the nature of my own special studies I felt best qualified to give. But the subject admits of very different treatments; and in nothing has Lord Gifford shown himself more judicious than in founding not one, but several lectureships in Natural Religion, so that inquiries which were so near his heart might not suffer from one-sided treatment. I look forward to the lectures of my learned colleagues at Edinburgh, St. Andrews, and Aberdeen, not only for instruction, but also for correction; though on some points, I may hope, for confirmation also of my own views on a subject which has been confided to our united care, and which more than any other requires for its safety a multitude of counsellors.

F. MAX MÜLLER.

OXFORD, *April* 20, 1889.

EXTRACTS from the TRUST DISPOSITION and SETTLEMENT of the late ADAM GIFFORD, sometime one of the Senators of the College of Justice, Scotland, dated 21st August, 1885.

I, ADAM GIFFORD, sometime one of the Senators of the College of Justice, Scotland, now residing at Granton House, near Edinburgh, being desirous to revise, consolidate, alter, and amend my trust-settlements and testamentary writings, and having fully and maturely considered my means and estate, and the circumstances in which I am placed, and the just claims and expectations of my son and relatives, and the modes in which my surplus funds may be most usefully and beneficially expended, and considering myself bound to apply part of my means in advancing the public welfare and the cause of truth, do hereby make my Trust-deed and latter Will and Testament—that is to say, I give my body to the earth as it was before, in order that the enduring blocks and materials thereof may be employed in new combinations; and I give my soul to God, in Whom and with Whom it always was, to be in Him and with Him for ever in closer and more conscious union; and with regard to my earthly means and estate, I do hereby, give, grant, dispone, convey, and make over and leave and bequeath All and Whole my whole means and estate, heritable and moveable, real and personal, of every description, now belonging to, or that shall belong to me at the time of my death, with all writs and vouchers thereof, to and in favour of Herbert James Gifford, my son; John Gifford, Esquire, my brother; Walter Alexander Raleigh, my nephew, presently residing in London; Adam West Gifford, W. S., my nephew; Andrew Scott, C. A., in Edinburgh, husband of my niece; and Thomas Raleigh, Esquire, barrister-at-law, London, and the survivors and survivor of them accepting, and the heirs of the last survivor, and to such other person or persons as I may name, or as may be assumed or appointed by competent authority, a majority

being always a quorum, as trustees for the ends, uses, and purposes aftermentioned, but in trust only for the purposes following: (Here follow the first ten purposes). And I declare the preceding ten purposes of this trust to be preferable, and I direct that these ten purposes be fulfilled in the first place before any others, and before any residue of my estate, or any part thereof, is disposed of, and before any residue is ascertained or struck, declaring that it is only what may remain of my means and estate after the said ten purposes are fulfilled that I call herein the 'residue' of my estate, and out of which I direct the lectureships aftermentioned to be founded and endowed. And in regard that, in so far as I can at present see or anticipate, there will be a large 'residue' of my means and estate in the sense in which I have above explained the word, being that which remains after fulfilling the above ten purposes, and being of opinion that I am bound if there is a 'residue' as so explained, to employ it, or part of it, for the good of my fellow-men, and having considered how I may best do so, I direct the 'residue' to be disposed of as follows:—I having been for many years deeply and firmly convinced that the true knowledge of God, that is, of the Being, Nature, and Attributes of the Infinite, of the All, of the First and the Only Cause, that is, the One and Only Substance and Being, and the true and felt knowledge (not mere nominal knowledge) of the relations of man and of the universe to Him, and of the true foundations of all ethics or morals, being, I say, convinced that this knowledge, when really felt and acted on, is the means of man's highest wellbeing, and the security of his upward progress, I have resolved, from the 'residue' of my estate as aforesaid, to institute and found, in connection, if possible, with the Scottish Universities, lectureships or classes for the promotion of the study of said subjects, and for the teaching and diffusion of sound views regarding them, among the whole population of Scotland. Therefore, I direct and appoint my said trustees from the 'residue' of my said estate, after fulfilling the said ten preferable purposes, to pay the following sums, or to assign and make over property of that value to the following bodies in trust:—*First*, To the Senatus Academicus of the University of Edinburgh, and failing them, by declinature or otherwise,

Definition of 'Residue.'

to the Dean and Faculty of Advocates of the College of Justice of Scotland, the sum of £25,000. *Second*, To the Senatus Academicus of the University of Glasgow, and failing them, by declinature or otherwise, to the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, the sum of £20,000. *Third*, To the Senatus Academicus of the University of Aberdeen, whom failing, by declinature or otherwise, to the Faculty of Advocates of Aberdeen, the sum of £20,000. And *Fourth*, to the Senatus Academicus of the University of St. Andrews, whom failing, by declinature or otherwise, to the Physicians and Surgeons of St. Andrews, and of the district twelve miles round it, the sum of £15,000 sterling, amounting the said four sums in all to the sum of £80,000 sterling; but said bequests are made, and said sums are to be paid in trust only for the following purpose, that is to say, for the purpose of establishing in each of the four cities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and St. Andrews, a Lectureship or Popular Chair for 'Promoting, Advancing, Teaching, and Diffusing the study of Natural Theology,' in the widest sense of that term, in other words, 'The Knowledge of God, the Infinite, the All, the First and Only Cause, the One and the Sole Substance, the Sole Being, the Sole Reality, and the Sole Existence, the Knowledge of His Nature and Attributes, the Knowledge of the Relations which men and the whole universe bear to Him, the Knowledge of the Nature and Foundation of Ethics or Morals, and of all Obligations and Duties thence arising.' The Senatus Academicus in each of the four Universities, or the bodies substituted to them respectively, shall be the patrons of the several lectureships, and the administrators of the said respective endowments, and of the affairs of each lectureship in each city. I call them for shortness simply the 'patrons.' Now I leave all the details and arrangements of each lectureship in the hands and in the discretion of the 'patrons' respectively, who shall have full power from time to time to adjust and regulate the same in conformity as closely as possible to the following brief principles and directions which shall be binding on each and all of the 'patrons' as far as practicable and possible. I only indicate leading principles. *First*, The endowment or capital fund of each lectureship shall be preserved entire, and be

£25,000 to Edinburgh University.

£20,000 to Glasgow University.

£20,000 to Aberdeen University.

£15,000 to Saint Andrews University.

To found Chair of Natural Theology.

Conditions.

Capital preserved entire.

invested securely upon or in the purchase of lands or heritages which are likely to continue of the same value, or increase in value, or in such other way as Statute may permit, merely the annual proceeds or interest shall be expended in maintaining the respective lectureships. *Second*, The 'patrons' may delay the institution of the lectureships, and may from time to time intermit the appointment of lecturers and the delivery of lectures for one or more years for the purpose of accumulating the income or enlarging capital. *Third*, The lecturers shall be appointed from time to time each for a period of only two years and no longer, but the same lecturer may be reappointed for other two periods of two years each, provided that no one person shall hold the office of lecturer in the same city for more than six years in all, it being desirable that the subject be promoted and illustrated by different minds. *Fourth*, The lecturers appointed shall be subjected to no test of any kind, and shall not be required to take any oath, or to emit or subscribe any declaration of belief, or to make any promise of any kind: they may be of any denomination whatever, or of no denomination at all (and many earnest and high-minded men prefer to belong to no ecclesiastical denomination); they may be of any religion or way of thinking, or, as is sometimes said, they may be of no religion, or they may be so-called sceptics or agnostics or freethinkers, provided only that the 'patrons' will use diligence to secure that they be able reverent men, true thinkers, sincere lovers of and earnest inquirers after truth. *Fifth*, I wish the lecturers to treat their subject as a strictly natural science, the greatest of all possible sciences, indeed, in one sense, the only science, that of Infinite Being, without reference to or reliance upon any supposed special exceptional or so-called miraculous revelation. I wish it considered just as astronomy or chemistry is. I have intentionally indicated, in describing the subject of the lectures, the general aspect which personally I would expect the lecturers to bear, but the lecturers shall be under no restraint whatever in their treatment of their theme; for example, they may freely discuss (and it may be well to do so) all questions about man's conceptions of God or the Infinite, their origin, nature, and truth, whether he can

Patrons may delay institution of chair, &c.

Lecturers appointed for two years.

Qualifications of lecturers.

Subject to be treated as a Natural Science.

have any such conceptions, whether God is under any or what limitations, and so on, as I am persuaded that nothing but good can result from free discussion. *Sixth*, The lectures shall be public and popular, that is, open not only to students of the Universities, but to the whole community without matriculation, as I think that the subject should be studied and known by all whether receiving University instruction or not. I think such knowledge, if real, lies at the root of all wellbeing. I suggest that the fee should be as small as is consistent with the due management of the lectureships, and the due appreciation of the lectures. Besides a general and popular audience, I advise that the lecturers also have a special class of students conducted in the usual way, and instructed by examination and thesis, written and oral. *Seventh*, As to the number of the lectures, much must be left to the discretion of the lecturer, I should think the subject cannot be treated even in abstract in less than twenty lectures, and they may be many times that number. *Eighth*, The 'patrons' if and when they see fit may make grants from the free income of the endowments for or towards the publication in a cheap form of any of the lectures, or any part thereof, or abstracts thereof, which they may think likely to be useful. *Ninth*, The 'patrons' respectively shall all annually submit their accounts to some one chartered accountant in Edinburgh, to be named from time to time by the Lord Ordinary on the Bills, whom failing, to the Accountant of the Court of Session, who shall prepare and certify a short abstract of the accounts and investments, to be recorded in the Books of Council and Session, or elsewhere, for preservation. And my desire and hope is that these lectureships and lectures may promote and advance among all classes of the community the true knowledge of Him Who is, and there is none and nothing besides Him, in Whom we live and move and have our being, and in Whom all things consist, and of man's real relationship to Him Whom truly to know is life everlasting. If the residue of my estate, in the sense before defined, should turn out insufficient to pay the whole sums above provided for the four lectureships (of which shortcoming, however, I trust there is no danger), then each lectureship shall suffer a propor-

Lectures to be popular, &c.

Number of lectures.

Publication of lectures.

Accounts to be audited annually.

tional diminution; and if, on the other hand, there is any surplus over and above the said sum of £80,000 sterling, it shall belong one half to my son, the said Herbert James Gifford, in liferent, and to his issue other than the heirs of entail in fee, whom failing, to my unmarried nieces equally in fee; and the other half shall belong equally among my unmarried nieces. And I revoke all settlements and codicils previous to the date hereof if this receives effect, providing that any payments made to legatees during my life shall be accounted as part payment of their provisions. And I consent to registration hereof for preservation, and I dispense with delivery thereof.—In witness whereof, these presents, written on this and the six preceding pages by the said Adam West Gifford, in so far as not written and filled in by my own hand, are, with the marginal notes on pages four and five (and the word 'secluding' on the eleventh line from top of page third, being written on an erasure), subscribed by me at Granton House, Edinburgh, this twenty-first day of August Eighteen hundred and eighty-five years, before these witnesses, James Foulis, Doctor of Medicine, residing in Heriot Row, Edinburgh, and John Campbell, cab driver, residing at No. 5 Mackenzie Place, Edinburgh.

If surplus after paying the Universities, One half to H. J. Gifford in liferent.

Other half to unmarried nieces.

Testing Clause.

AD. GIFFORD.

James Foulis, M.D., Heriot Row, Edinburgh, *witness.*

John Campbell, cab driver, 5 Mackenzie Place, *witness.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

PAGE

PREFACE v

LORD GIFFORD'S WILL vii

LECTURE I.

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE ON LORD GIFFORD'S BEQUEST 1-26

LECTURE II.

DEFINITION OF RELIGION.

Definition of religion, why wanted.—Great differences in defining religion.—Is Buddhism a religion?—Definition of definition.—Etymological definition.—Historical definition.—Dogmatic definition.—Etymological definition of *religio*.—Historical definition of *religio*.—Later meanings of *religio*.—Dogmatic definitions.—Religion and theology.—Dogmatic and practical religion.—Comparative theology.—Schleiermacher's definition of religion.—Religion, either belief or body of doctrines . . 27-50

LECTURE III.

EXAMINATION OF DEFINITIONS.

Natural and revealed religions.—Comparative theology.—*Modus cognoscendi et colendi Deum*.—Feeling or knowledge as motive of action.—The object of religion must be defined.—Fichte on atheism.—Goethe and Lavater.—Different classes of definitions.—Practical religion.—Kant.—Caird.—Pfleiderer.—Martineau.—Schenkel and Newman.—Theoretical religion.—Religion as sentiment or knowledge.—Lotze.—Author of

PAGE
'Natural Religion.' — Goethe. — Mill. — Spinoza, 1632-77. — Schleiermacher, 1768-1834.—Hegel, 1770-1831.—Fichte, 1762-1814.—How to account for these different definitions . 51-72

LECTURE IV.

Positivist Definitions of Religion.

Wundt.—Feuerbach.—Gruppe.—Selfishness as source of religion.—Gruppe's definition too narrow.—Universality of religion.—Angle of vision.—Darwin on Tierra del Fuego.—Niebuhr and Bunsen.—Lubbock *v.* Quatrefages.—Preconceived ideas.—Names for religion.—Words for religion in Chinese; in Arabic.—Dharma.—Veda.—Bhakti.—*Sraddhâ*, faith. 73-102

LECTURE V.

My own Definition of Religion.

Is Buddhism a religion?—Buddhism, as theoretical, not included under any definition.—Mâluńkya-putta and Buddha.—Yamaka, on life after death.—Dialogue between the king of Kosala and the nun Khemâ.—Buddhism, as practical, not included under any definition.—The doctrine of Karma.—Definition of religion.—Religion an experience.—Experience consists of sensations, percepts, concepts, and names.—Sensation and perception inexplicable.—The working of our mind.—No percept without language; Virchow.—Perceptions always finite.—Finite and definite —The finite implies the infinite.—The infinite in space.—The infinite in time.—The infinite as cause.—Misunderstandings.—Savages without words for finite and infinite.—The Duke of Argyll's definition of religion.—Early names of the infinite.—Mana.—Manito.—Does the Vedic religion begin with sacrifice?—Germs of the infinite in the Veda.—The infinitely great.—The infinitely small.—Infinite inseparable from finite.—The concept of cause . . 103-140

LECTURE VI.

The Infinite in Nature, in Man, and in the Self.

Positivist objections.—Historical evolution.—Positivist point of view.—Rig-veda.—The dawn.—End and endless.—Endless in the Avesta.—Theogonic elements.—How the perception of

PAGE

the infinite led to religious ideas.—Tangible, semi-tangible, intangible objects.—Trees.—Mountains.—Rivers.—Earth.—Clouds, stars, moon, sun, sky.—Demi-gods and great gods.—The infinite in man as an object.—The something behind man.—The infinite behind man.—Religious ideas springing from it.—Animism.—*Seelencult.*—Strange names; Totemism.—The infinite in man as a subject.—Psychological deities.—Sense, imagination, intellect, language.—Devatâs.—Âtmâ.—Natural religion, as physical, anthropological, and psychological . 141-165

LECTURE VII.

RELIGION DIFFERENT FROM SCIENCE.

Religious character.—Religion and science.—What imparts a religious character.—Moral influences of physical phenomena.—Vedic prayers.—Early morality.—Moral influence of ancestral spirits.—Ancestral law in China.—Moral influence of psychological deities.—Temple to *Mens.*—*Eros* and *Psyche.*—Conscience.—Remorse.—Have we a conscience?—Sacrifices an element of religion.—Priesthood.—Study of the Veda.—Final definition of religion 166-191

LECTURE VIII.

THE HISTORICAL METHOD.

Criticisms of my definition.—Pfleiderer.—Gruppe.—Religion a psychological necessity.—History *v.* Theory.—Theory.—*Causalitas.*—*Eminentia.*—*Negatio.*—Cosmological, teleological, ontological arguments.—Historical method.—Archaeology.—Theoretic school.—Historical school.—Study of language.—Historical school.—*Acutus.*—Theoretic school.—Brinton on palaeolithic language.—Advantages of both theories.—Science of religion.—Historical school.—Semitic, Aryan, Chinese religions.—Religions without books 192-220

LECTURE IX.

HISTORICAL TREATMENT OF RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS.

Is religion possible?—History and theory inseparable.—Agnosticism.—Epicurean view of the gods.—Chance and purpose; Darwin.—Atheism.—Intuitive knowledge of the gods.—

PAGE

Philosophical treatment.—Vision in the Bhagavadgîtâ.—Revelation.—Historical traces in the Veda.—The old problems in their simpler form 221–288

LECTURE X.

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RELIGIOUS PROBLEMS.

Modern problems to be traced back.—Creation.—The logic of facts. — Cosmological argument. — Aryan savages. —Why?—Answers to the cosmological question.—Emanation.—Emanation or *srishti*.—Golden egg.—Teleological argument.—Anthropomorphism.—Ontological argument.—A creator.—Origin of the idea of cause.—Religions without a creator.—The theory of evolution.—Meaning of evolution.—Darwin admits a creator.—Herder, the precursor of Darwin.—Evolution in the beginning of our century.—Gottfried Hermann.—Kant on the Chimpanzee. — Darwin. — Oken. — Reaction. — Historical school, its true character.—Stanley.—Necessity of an historical study of religion.—Criticisms answered . . . 239–279

LECTURE XI.

MATERIALS FOR THE STUDY OF NATURAL RELIGION.

Language, Myth, Customs and Laws, Sacred Books.—Language as evidence.—Survey of languages.—ARYAN FAMILY.—English. —Veda = *οἶδα*.—Anglo-Saxon. — Gothic.— Continental Saxon.—Scandinavian.—Thorr and Thursday.—Týr and Tuesday. —Wodan and Wednesday. — High German. — Celtic. — Italic. — Hellenic. — Slavonic. — North-Western Division. — South-Eastern Division.—Indic class, Vedic Hymns, Brâhmaṇas, Sûtras, Pâṇinean Sanskrit.—Inscriptions of Piyadasi, third century B. C.—Buddhist Sanskrit.—Renaissance of Sanskrit literature.—Prâkrit.—Vernaculars.—Sacred Books.—Iranic class. — Cuneiform Persian inscriptions. — Pehlevi. — Bask, Etruscan.—SEMITIC FAMILY.—Aramaic.—Chaldaic and Syriac. —Hebraic.—Arabic.—Ethiopic 280–310

LECTURE XII.

PRINCIPLES OF CLASSIFICATION.

Languages not Aryan and not Semitic.—Morphological classification.—Genealogical as different from morphological

PAGE

classification.—Degrees of relationship.—Morphological classification.—Radical stage.—Terminational stage.—Inflectional stage.—Transitions from one stage to another.—Chinese.—Rask's and Prichard's classification.—Vocalic harmony . 311–327

LECTURE XIII.

LANGUAGES NOT ARYAN AND NOT SEMITIC.

The Ural-Altaic family.—Samoyedic.—Altaic languages.—Tungusic class.—Mongolic class.—Turkic class.—Turkish grammar.—Finno-Ugric class.—Fins.—Estonians.—Tamulic languages.—Munda languages.—Taic languages.—Gangetic languages.—Lohitic languages.—Languages of Farther India.—Languages of the Caucasus.—Egyptian.—Africa.—America.—Oceanic languages.—Malay.—Polynesia.—Melanesia . 328–350

LECTURE XIV.

LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT.

What should we be without language.—Definition of thinking.—What are we thinking of?—Thinking in German or English.—Why we cannot think without words.—Communication, not language.—Images.—Involuntary and voluntary sounds.—The Bow-wow, Pooh-pooh, and Yo-heho theories.—Roots.—Words derived from conceptual roots.—Are concepts possible without words?—Berkeley.—Process of naming.—Origin of concepts.—Former theories.—The *clamor concomitans*.—The conceptual foundation of language.—Our conceptual world 351–384

LECTURE XV.

DYNAMIC STAGE.

Lessons of language.—Roots express our acts.—Some acts conceived as passive.—Subjective acts predicated of other agents.—Subjective acts predicated of objects.—Dynamic stage.—Animism.—Egypt.—Semitic names.—Finland.—Hidatsas in North America.—Growth of language.—Causality.—Objections answered.—Gender.—Dyaus, as a masculine . . . 385–410

LECTURE XVI.

MYTHOLOGY.

PAGE

Myths.—Meaning of mythology.—Etymology of μῦθος.—Myth, a word.—Eos.—Mythology universal.—Comparative mythology and its three divisions.—Comparative philology.—Etymological school.—Analogical school.—Psychological school.—Comparative mythology.—A. Barth.—Etymological school.—Analogical school.—Psychological school.—I. The Etymological School.—Names of gods.—Dialectic varieties.—Obsolete names.—The Dawn.—Religious germs.—Moral germs.—Ahanâ = Athene.—Daphne.—Benfey's theory of Athene 411-447

LECTURE XVII.

THE GENEALOGICAL SCHOOL.

Identification and comparison.—Sarad and Ceres.—Mythological etymologies.—Changes in the character of gods.—Accidental similarities of names.—Foreign gods.—Mythological names which admit of no etymology.—The names of gods.—The etymological meaning must be physical.—Learned and popular etymologies of Greeks and Romans.—Haritas and Charites.—Fors, Fortuna.—Nomina and cognomina . 448-483

LECTURE XVIII.

THE ANALOGICAL AND PYSCHOLOGICAL SCHOOLS.

II. The Analogical School.—Characters common to gods and heroes of different names.—Rudra, Apollon, Wuotan.—Myths agreeing in one and differing in other names.—Varuṇa and Ormazd.—III. The Psychological School.—Völker-psychologie.—Advantages in England, India, Colonies, Missionary Societies.—Work done in America.—The true meaning of Manito 484-518

LECTURE XIX.

ON CUSTOMS AND LAWS.

Materials for the study of customs and laws.—Customs based on religious ideas.—Customs generating religious ideas.—Sol-

PAGE

lennis.—Annual festivals.—Istar and Tammuz.—Zeus Xenios. —How customs should be studied 519–537

LECTURE XX.

Sacred Books.

What is a sacred book?—The five birthplaces of sacred books.—Survey of sacred books.—India.—The Veda.—Buddhism.—Influence of the Kshatriyas, the nobility.—Media and Persia.—China.—Palestine.—Judaism.—Christianity.—Mohammedanism.—The Eight Religions.—Book-religions.—The invention of writing.—Influence of writing on religion.—Individual and national religions.—Mohammed.—Christ.—Buddha.—Confucius.—Lao-tze.—Zoroaster.—Moses.—Sacred books, when consigned to writing.—The founders of religions are never the writers of sacred books.—The Veda originally not written.—The Avesta originally not written.—The Tripitaka not Buddha's work.—Confucius, writer, not author, of the Kings.—The Old Testament.—The New Testament.—Mohammed could neither read nor write.—Religions with and without sacred books.—Conclusion 538–577

Index 579–608

NATURAL THEOLOGY.

LECTURE I.

LORD GIFFORD'S munificent endowment of a Lectureship of *Natural Theology*, to which I have had the undeserved honour of being elected by the Senate of this ancient and illustrious University, must be reckoned among the signs of the times, pregnant with meaning.

This lectureship, with three others in the Universities of Edinburgh, St. Andrews, and Aberdeen, was founded, as you know, by the late Lord Gifford, a Scotch lawyer, who by ability, hard work, and self-denial had amassed a large fortune, and attained the dignified position of a seat on the Bench.

I have not been able to gather from his friends much information about his personal character and the private circumstances of his life. Nor do they all agree in the estimate they formed of him. Some represented him to me as a keen, hardworking, and judicious man, engrossed by his professional work, yet with a yearning for quietness, for some hours of idleness that should allow him to meditate on the great problems of life, those ancient problems which the practical man may wave away from

year to year, but which knock at our door louder and louder as we grow old, and will not allow themselves to be turned into the street, like beggars and vagabonds. We all know the practical man of the world, who tells us that he has no time to listen to these inward questionings, that he is satisfied with what the Church teaches or with what men wiser than himself have settled for him, that he has tried to do his duty to his neighbours, and that he trusts to God's mercy for all the rest. Men like to entrench themselves in their little castles, to keep their bridges drawn and their portcullis ready to fall on any unwelcome guests. Or, to quote the words of my friend, Matthew Arnold,—

> 'I knew the mass of men conceal'd
> Their thoughts, for fear that, if reveal'd,
> They would by other men be met
> With blank indifference, or with blame reprov'd:
> I knew they lived and mov'd
> Trick'd in disguises, alien to the rest
> Of men, and alien to themselves.'

But this was not the impression which Lord Gifford left on the mind of those who knew him best. Some of his relations and a few of his more intimate friends seem to have been startled at times by the fervour and earnestness with which he spoke to them on religious and philosophical topics. Even when he was in full practice as a lawyer, the first thing he did, I am told, when he returned from the Parliament House on Saturdays, was to lock the door of his library, and devote himself to his own favourite authors, never looking at a professional book or paper till it was necessary to begin work on Monday. He had a separate set of books altogether in his bedroom, amongst which he spent every moment of his spare time during

session, and probably almost his whole vacation. He was devoted to Plato as well as to Spinoza, and read philosophy both ancient and modern in all directions, as well as poetry and the best current literature of the day.

But the world at large knew him chiefly as a successful lawyer, as a man always ready to help in any useful and charitable work, and satisfied to accept the traditional forms of public worship, as a necessary tribute which every member of a religious as well as of a political community must pay for the maintenance of order, peace, and charity. During the last seven years of his life, when confined to the sick-room by creeping paralysis, his mind, always active, bright, and serene, became more and more absorbed in the study of the various systems of philosophy and religion, both Christian and non-Christian, and he made no secret to his own relatives of his having been led by these studies to surrender some of the opinions which they and he himself had been brought up to consider as essential to Christianity. There can be no doubt that he deliberately rejected all miracles, whether as a judge, on account of want of evidence, or as a Christian, because they seemed to him in open conflict with the exalted spirit of Christ's own teaching. Yet he remained always a truly devout Christian, trusting more in the great miracle of Christ's life and teaching on earth than in the small miracles ascribed to him by many of his followers. Some of his lectures and manuscript notes are still in existence, and may possibly some day be published [1], and throw light on the gradual development of his religious opinions.

[1] One volume has been privately published, *Lectures delivered on various occasions by Adam Gifford*, 1889.

After his elevation to the Bench gave him comparative leisure, he lectured from time to time on aesthetic, literary, philosophical subjects; but he never seems to have given offence, and those who knew him, little suspected this hard-working lawyer of having his whole soul engrossed by Spinoza's Ethics or the metaphysics of religion.

And yet when his Will was opened, the one thing which that excellent man, after making ample provision for his family, had evidently had most at heart, was to help the world to a clearer insight into the great problems of life than he himself in his busy career had been allowed to gain, to spread more correct and more enlightened views on the origin, the historical growth, and the true purpose of religion, and thus to help in the future towards an honest understanding between those who now stand opposed to each other, the believers and unbelievers, as they are called, unaware that as we all see through a glass darkly, we can only speak through our words faintly, and not always, rightly.

Allow me to quote some extracts from this remarkable Will:—

'*I, Adam Gifford, sometime one of the Senators of the College of Justice, Scotland, . . . having fully and maturely considered my means and estate . . . and the just claims and expectations of my son and relations . . . and considering myself bound to apply part of my means in advancing the public welfare and the cause of truth, do hereby make my Trust-deed and latter Will and Testament, that is to say, I give my body to the earth as it was before, in order that the enduring blocks and materials thereof may*

be employed in new combinations; and I give my soul to God, in Whom and with Whom it always was, to be in Him and with Him for ever in closer and more conscious union.'

When Lord Gifford proceeds to declare that, after having provided for his relatives, he feels himself bound to employ what is over and above, for the good of his fellow men, he says,—

'*I, having been for many years deeply and firmly convinced that the true knowledge of God, that is, of the Being, Nature, and Attributes of the Infinite, of the All, of the First and only Cause, that is, the One and Only Substance and Being, and the true and felt knowledge (not merely nominal knowledge) of the relations of man and of the universe to Him, and of the true foundations of all ethics and morals,—being, I say, convinced that this knowledge, when really felt and acted on, is the means of man's highest well-being, and the security of his upward progress, I have resolved . . . to institute and found . . . lectureships or classes for the promotion of the study of said subjects, and for the teaching and diffusion of sound views regarding them, among the whole population of Scotland.*'

In a later paragraph of his Will, he defines more fully what he understands by Natural Theology and by sound views, and what subjects he wishes particularly to be taught.

'*Natural Theology,*' he says, '*in the widest sense of that term, is the Knowledge of God, the Infinite, the All, the First and Only Cause, the One and the Sole Substance, the Sole Being, the Sole Reality, and the Sole Existence, the Knowledge of His Na-*

ture and Attributes, the Knowledge of the Relations which men and the whole universe bear to Him, the Knowledge of the Nature and Foundation of Ethics and Morals, and of all Obligations and Duties hence arising.'

If Lord Gifford had said no more than this in his Will, we might have thought that he had been influenced by the high and noble, yet not very uncommon, motives of a man who wishes to see his own peculiar views of religion perpetuated for the benefit of mankind. He would have ranked among the pious founders and benefactors of this country, by the side of Chichele, Wolsey, Henry the Eighth, and other patrons of the Church in former ages. But no; and here we see the wisdom and large-mindedness of Lord Gifford.

'*The lecturers*,' he says, '*shall be subjected to no test of any kind, and shall not be required to take any oath, or to emit or subscribe any declaration of belief, or to make any promise of any kind; they may be of any denomination whatever, or of no denomination at all (and many earnest and high-minded men prefer to belong to no ecclesiastical denomination); they may be of any religion or way of thinking, or, as is sometimes said, they may be of no religion, or they may be so-called sceptics or agnostics or freethinkers, provided only that the "patrons" will use diligence to secure that they be able, reverent men, true thinkers, sincere lovers of and earnest inquirers after truth.*'

And further—

'*I wish the lecturers to treat their subject as a strictly natural science, the greatest of all possible*

sciences, indeed, in one sense, the only science, that of Infinite Being, without reference to or reliance upon any supposed exceptional and so-called miraculous revelation. I wish it considered just as astronomy or chemistry is. I have intentionally indicated, in describing the subject of the lectures, the general aspect which personally I would expect the lectures to bear; but the lecturers shall be under no restraint whatever in their treatment of their theme; for example, they may freely discuss—(and it may be well to do so)—all questions about man's conceptions of God or the Infinite, their origin, nature, and truth, whether he can have any such conceptions, whether God is under any or what limitations, and so on, as I am persuaded that nothing but good can result from free discussion.'

You will now understand why I call the foundation of these Lectureships a sign, and a very important sign, of the times. Our nineteenth century, which will soon have passed away, has been described as a century of progress and enlightenment in all branches of human knowledge, in science, in scholarship, in philosophy, and in art. In religion alone it is said that we have remained stationary. While everything else has been improved, while new discoveries have been made which have changed the whole face of the earth, while our philosophy, our laws, even our morality, bear the impress of the nineteenth century, nay, of all the nineteen centuries which have passed over them since the beginning of our era, it is said, and not without a certain kind of pride, that our religion has remained unchanged, at least in all its essential elements.

Whether this is really so, depends on the meaning which we attach to the essential elements of religion, and in religion, more than in anything else, essential elements are but too often treated as non-essential, and, what is worse, non-essential as essential. The historian would have no great difficulty in showing that the Christianity of the Council of Nicaea is not in all essential points exactly the same as the Christianity of the Sermon of the Mount, and that the reformers of the sixteenth century at all events did not consider the Christianity of Papal Rome essentially the same as that of the Council of Nicaea. There *has* been change, whether we call it growth or decay, during the nineteen centuries that Christ's religion has swayed the destinies of the world. Yet the fact remains, that while in all other spheres of human thought, what is new is welcomed, anything new in religion is generally frowned upon. Nay, even when we seem to see healthy growth and natural progress in religion, it generally assumes the form of retrogression, of a *re*turn to the original intentions of the founder of a religion, of a *re*storation or *re*form, in the etymological sense of that word, that is, of a going back to the original form.

Why should that be so? Why should there be progress in everything else, only not in religion? The usual answer that religion rests on a divine and miraculous revelation, and therefore cannot be improved, is neither true nor honest. And to use such an argument in this place would be disloyal to the memory of the Founder of this lectureship, who wished religion to be treated 'without reference to or reliance upon any supposed exceptional and so-called miracu-

lous revelation.' But those who use that argument seem really to forget that they are contradicting themselves. They hold the Old as well as the New Testament to have been divinely revealed, and yet they would not deny that the New Testament represents a decided progress as compared with the Old. Through the whole of the Gospels there seems to sound that one deep note, 'Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time—But I say unto you.' Nay, we might go further. We know that some of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity were in the eyes of the Jews irreligious. The idea of a divine sonship was not only new to the Jews, it was blasphemy in their eyes, and worthy of death. And yet that very idea has become the corner-stone of a new religion, which new religion calls itself not the destruction, but the fulfilment of the old.

There is nothing in the idea of revelation that excludes progress, for whatever definition of revelation we may adopt, it always represents a communication between the Divine on one side and the Human on the other. Let us grant that the divine element in revelation, that is, whatever of truth there is in revelation, is immutable, yet the human element, the recipient, must always be liable to the accidents and infirmities of human nature. That human element can never be eliminated in any religion, certainly not in our own, unless we claim infallibility not only for the founder of our religion and his disciples, but for their disciples also, and for a whole succession of the successors and vicars of Christ. To ignore that human element in all religions is like ignoring the eye as the recipient and determinant of the colours of light. We

know more of the sun than our forefathers, though the same sun shone on them which shines on us; and if astronomy has benefitted by its telescopes, which have strengthened the powers of the human eye, theology also ought not to despise whatever can strengthen the far-sightedness of human reason in its endeavours to gain a truer and purer idea of the Divine. A veil will always remain. No astronomer ventures to look at the sun without darkening his lens, and man will have to look at what is beyond through a glass darkly. But as in every other pursuit, so in religion also, we want less and less of darkness, more and more of light; we want, call it life, or growth, or development, or progress; we do not want mere rest, mere stagnation, mere death.

Now, I say once more, the foundation of this lectureship of Natural Theology seems to me a sign of the times, pregnant with meaning. Lord Gifford, intelligent observer of the world as he was, must have been struck with the immense advances which all other sciences had been making during his lifetime, and the increasing benefits which they had conferred on society at large. And so he says in the clearest words:

'*I wish Natural Theology to be treated by my lecturers as astronomy or chemistry is, as a strictly natural science, the greatest of all possible sciences, indeed, in one sense, the only science.*'

What does that mean? It seems to me to mean that this observant and clear-headed Scotch lawyer, though he could follow the progress of human knowledge from a distance only, had convinced himself

that theology should not stand aloof from the onward stream of human knowledge, that it should not be treated according to rules of evidence and principles of criticism different from those to which all other sciences, and more particularly his own science, the Science of Law, owed their strength, their life, and their vigorous growth, but that it should take its place as a science among sciences, undismayed by dangers, and trusting in the inevitable triumph of truth. Whatever other Universities might say, he wished the Scotch Universities to take the lead, and to stretch out the right hand of fellowship to the newest among the sciences, the last-born child of the nineteenth century, the *Science of Religion.*

Some people profess to be frightened at the very name of the Science of Religion; but if they approached this new science more closely, they would soon find that there is nothing behind that name that need frighten them. What does this science consist in? First of all, in a careful collection of all the facts of religion; secondly, in a comparison of religions with a view of bringing to light what is peculiar to each, and what they all share in common; thirdly, in an attempt to discover, on the strength of the evidence thus collected, what is the true nature, the origin, and purpose of all religion.

I ask, then, Where is the danger? And why should our Universities hesitate to recognise the Science of Religion as much as the Science of Language, or the Science of Thought? The first Universities which provided chairs for the comparative study of the religions of the world were those of little, plucky

Holland. In 1880 France followed their example, and M. Reville was appointed the first professor of the Science of Religion at the *Collège de France*. In 1886 a special school was founded at the *École des Hautes Études* in Paris for the study of religions. In Germany lectures on the great religions of the world were generally given by the professors who taught the languages in which the sacred writings were composed. This is an excellent plan, perhaps the best that could be devised. The professor of Arabic would lecture on the Qur'ân, the professor of Persian on the Avesta, the professor of Sanskrit on the Veda, the professor of Hebrew on the Old Testament. Lately, however, separate chairs have been created for Comparative Theology in Germany also, and even in the Roman Catholic University of Freiburg this new study has now found a worthy representative [1].

It may seem strange to some that Lord Gifford should have expressed a wish that the Science of Religion should be treated as a strictly natural science. He may have thought of the method of the natural sciences only; but it seems to me not unlikely that he meant more, and that looking on man as an integral part, nay as the very crown of nature, he wished religion to be treated as a spontaneous and necessary outcome of the mind of man, when brought under the genial influence of surrounding nature. If religion, such as we find it in all ages and among all races of men, is a natural product of the human mind—and who denies this?—and if the human mind, in its his-

[1] *Die allgemeine vergleichende Religionswissenschaft im akademischen Studium unserer Zeit*, von Dr. E. Hardy, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1887.

torical development, cannot be dissevered from that nature on whose breasts it feeds and lives and grows, the Science of Religion has certainly as perfect a right as the Science of Language to be classed as one of the natural sciences.

But that view does by no means exclude an historical study of religion; nay, to my mind, the more interesting, if not the more important part of the Science of Religion, is certainly concerned with what we call the historical development of religious thought and language. It is the same with the Science of Language. That science is certainly one of the natural sciences, but we should never forget that it is full of interest also when treated as an historical science. The line of demarcation between the natural and the historical sciences is not so easy to draw as some philosophers imagine, who would claim even the Science of Language as an exclusively historical science. All depends here as elsewhere on a proper definition of the terms which we employ. If we once clearly understand what we mean by the natural and what by the historical sciences, we shall quickly understand each other; or, if we differ still, we may at all events agree to differ. Without it, all wrangling *pro* or *con* is mere waste of time, and may be carried on *ad infinitum* [1].

From my own point of view, which I need not vindicate again, I am able to accept Lord Gifford's designation of the Science of Religion as a natural science in both meanings of which that name admits. I share with him the conviction that the same treat-

[1] *Lectures on the Science of Language*, vol. i. p. 1; 'The Science of Language as one of the Physical Sciences.' See also M. Raoul de la Grasserie, *Études de Grammaire Comparée*, 1888, p. 3.

ment which has caused the natural sciences to gain their greatest triumphs, namely, a critical collection of facts, will be the most appropriate treatment of the Science of Religion; nor should I differ from him in looking on man, in his purely phenomenal character, as a part of nature, nay, as her highest achievement, so that, if religion can be shown to be a natural outcome of our faculties, we may readily accept the Science of Religion as one of the natural sciences, in the most comprehensive meaning of that term. Anyhow, I hope I shall best carry out the intentions of the founder of this lectureship by devoting these lectures, firstly, to a careful collection of the facts of religion; secondly, to an intercomparison of these facts; and thirdly, to an interpretation of their meaning.

But Lord Gifford has not only indicated what he wished chiefly to be taught in these lectures on Natural Theology; he has been even more careful to indicate the spirit by which he hoped that his lecturers would be guided. And this seems to me the most remarkable feature of his bequest. Lord Gifford was evidently what the world would call a devout and religious man, and you have heard how in his Will he expressed his conviction that a true knowledge of God is the means of man's highest well-being and the security of his upward progress. Yet so strong was his conviction that all scientific inquiry must be perfectly free, if it is to be useful, that he would hear of no restrictions in the choice of his lecturers.

'*They may be of any denomination whatever*,' he says, '*or of no denomination at all; they may be of any religion or of no religion at all; they may be so-called sceptics or freethinkers, so long as they have*

proved themselves sincere lovers of and earnest inquirers after truth.'

Now in this large-hearted charity, and at the same moment, in this unshaken faith in the indestructible character of religion, we may surely recognise a sign of the times. Would such a Will have been possible fifty years ago? Would any English, would any Scotch University at that time have accepted a lectureship on such conditions? I doubt it; and I see in the ready acceptance of these conditions on the part of the Scotch Universities the best proof that in the study and true appreciation of religion also, our nineteenth century has not been stationary.

When it was first suggested that one of these Gifford readerships might be offered to me, I replied at once to my friends at Edinburgh, Glasgow, and St. Andrews, that I could not become a candidate. It so happened that I was informed at the same time that my own University might again require my services, and I felt very strongly that at my time of life I ought not to undertake new duties, but rather finish, if possible, the work which I had in hand. If I tell you that I was pledged to a new edition of the Rig-veda, which consists of six volumes quarto, of about a thousand pages each, and that besides that, I was engaged in putting a finishing touch to an English translation of the hymns of that Veda,—to say nothing of new editions of several of my other books, which, like myself, had grown old and antiquated, you will readily believe that, strongly as I felt tempted, and highly as I felt honoured that I should have been thought of as a fit candidate, I thought it wise not to enter on a new campaign.

But when I was informed by your Principal that, though not a candidate, I had been elected, and unanimously elected, by the Senate of your University, I had not strength enough to say No. Whether I acted wisely or foolishly, the future must show. But when I had once said Yes, I must confess it was to me like the beginning of a new life. Some of the work on which I was engaged had to be thrown overboard; but I had now an opportunity, and a splendid opportunity, for summing up the whole work of my life.

Forgive me if, for a short while, I speak of myself. I know it is very wrong, and may sound very selfish. But I am anxious to explain to you what the main outline of the work of my life has been, and why I hope that in these lectures I may be able to gather up what seems to me worth preserving, and at the same time to place before you the final outcome of life-long labours, devoted to what the ancient Greeks called τὰ μέγιστα, the greatest things. As a student at Leipzig, in the year 1841, I began my studies as a classical scholar, as a pupil of Gottfried Hermann, Haupt, Westermann, Nobbe, and Stallbaum. These were great names at the time, and excellent teachers; but even before I had taken my degree, I was tempted away by philosophy, attending the lectures of Christian H. Weisse, Drobisch, Hartenstein, and Lotze. Leipzig was then richer in great teachers than any other University in Germany. Hartenstein represented the classical Kantian school; Drobisch was a follower of Herbart; Weisse made propaganda for Hegelianism; Lotze, then quite a young Privatdocent, started a philosophical system of his own,

which now begins, I believe, to attract attention in Scotland also. I imagined at that time I was a Hegelian, and I well remember when I passed my final Examination at Leipzig, and had been wrangling for a long time with my Examiner, Professor Drobisch, all in Latin, on the respective merits of Hegel and Herbart, Drobisch, who was then Dean of the Philosophical Faculty, and who I believe is lecturing still at Leipzig, addressed me in the following words: *Vir doctissime, quamvis nostris sententiis toto coelo distemus, tamen te creo atque pronuntio magistrum Artium et Doctorem Philosophiae in Universitate nostra.* The dissertation which I wrote in 1843, in order to obtain my Doctor's degree, was 'On the Third Book of Spinoza's Ethics, *De Affectibus.*'

In the meantime, like many other young philosophers, I had been attracted by Schelling's fame to Berlin, where I attended his lectures, and soon become personally acquainted with the old sage. He was at that time an old man, more of a poet and prophet than of a philosopher; and his lectures on the philosophy of mythology and religion opened many new views to my mind. But, though I admired the depth and the wide range of his ideas, I could not help being struck by what seemed to me his unfounded statements with regard to the ancient religions of the East. I had at Leipzig studied Arabic under Fleischer, and Sanskrit under Brockhaus, and I was then reading Persian with Rückert at Berlin. Though I was a mere boy, Schelling was quite willing to listen to some of my criticisms, and at his request I then translated for him some of the most important Upanishads, which form part of the ancient

Vedic literature. I have never been able to recover that translation, and it was not till 1879 that I published a new, and, I hope, more accurate translation of these theosophic treatises, in my *Sacred Books of the East.*

I soon came to see, however, that these Upanishads were only the latest outcome of Vedic literature, and that in order to know their antecedents, in order to be able to appreciate the historical growth of the Indian mind during the Vedic age, we must study the ancient hymns of the Veda. I remember having a most interesting discussion on the relative importance of the Vedic hymns and the Upanishads with Schopenhauer at Frankfort. He considered that the Upanishads were the only portion of the Veda which deserved our study, and that all the rest was priestly rubbish (*Priester-wirthschaft*). His own philosophy, he declared, was founded on the Upanishads, which, as he says in one of his books, 'have been the solace of my life, and will be the solace of my death[1].' To me it seemed that an historical study of the Vedic religion ought to begin with the hymns of the Rig-veda, as containing in thought and language the antecedents of the Upanishads. The first book only of the Rig-veda, the collection of hymns, had then been published by Frederick Rosen, and Rosen had died before even that first volume was printed. I felt convinced that all mythological and religious theories would remain without a solid foundation till the whole of the Rig-veda had been published. This idea took complete possession of me, and young as I was, and, I ought to

[1] Upanishads, translated by Max Müller, in *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. i. p. lxi.

add, reckless as I was, instead of beginning my work as a lecturer in one of the German Universities, I went to Paris to attend Burnouf's lectures, and to copy and collate the MSS. of the Veda and its voluminous commentary. It was hard work, very uphill work indeed, for Sanskrit was not known then as it is now, and the whole literature on which Sâya*na*'s great commentary on the Rig-veda is founded, was then almost entirely a *terra incognita*, and had first to be discovered, and to be studied from MSS. in the *Bibliothèque Royale*, as it was then called, or in Burnouf's private library. I often thought that I should have to give it up, and return as a Privatdocent to a German University, for I am not ashamed to say that during all that time at Paris, I had to maintain myself, as I have done ever since, with these three fingers. However, encouraged and helped by Burnouf, I persevered, and when I was ready to begin the printing of the first volume, I came to England, as I thought for a few weeks only, to collate some MSS. at the East India House in Leadenhall Street, and to make the acquaintance of Professor Wilson, at that time the Nestor of real Sanskrit scholars in Europe. New clouds, however, were then gathering on my horizon. The Imperial Academy of St. Petersburg, even at that time deeply interested in Indian literature, had voted large funds for bringing out an edition of the Rig-veda with Sâya*na*'s commentary, and had asked the East India Company for the loan of those very MSS. which I had come to London to copy and collate. At the same time Professor Wilson, in the name of the East India Company, had sent invitations to the most learned Pandits in India,

asking them whether they would undertake an edition of the Rig-veda in India. All my plans seemed thus to collapse; but I need not trouble you with my personal troubles. Suffice it to say that the Pandits of India declined to undertake the edition of the text and commentary of the Rig-veda, for the simple reason that the study of Vedic literature had at that time been entirely neglected in India; that the Directors of the late East India Company thought it unfair that the MSS. of the Rig-veda should be sent to the Imperial Academy at St. Petersburg at the very time when I had come to London to make use of them; and that, on the recommendation of my old friend, Professor Wilson, the East India Company entrusted me with the publication of the Rig-veda at their expense.

I did not accept this offer with a light heart. It meant giving up my University career in Germany, and more than that, it meant severe drudgery and the very smallest pay for many years to come. I had no illusions about Sâya*ṇa*'s commentary. I knew it was the *sine quâ non* for all scholarlike study of the Veda; but I had seen enough of it to know that it certainly did not contain the key to a real understanding of the ancient hymns of the Veda. Besides that, even the Veda was to me only a means to an end, namely, a philosophy of mythology and religion, based on more trustworthy materials than those on which Schelling had been able to build his later philosophy of religion and mythology.

Thus, while I determined to work for others in bringing out as complete and correct an edition of the Rig-veda and its commentary as was then pos-

sible, I made up my mind at the same time to carry on my own work. Having then settled at Oxford, and having been appointed to lecture on Modern Literature and Language, I devoted my leisure to a study of the *Science of Language.* A study of language is absolutely necessary as an introduction to the study of philosophy as well as of religion. Whatever further research may teach us about the true nature of language, it is clear, from a purely practical point of view, that language supplies at least the tools of thought, and that a knowledge of these tools is as essential to a philosopher, as a knowledge of his ship and his oars is to a sailor. The Science of Language, as I treated it in my Lectures at Oxford, is pre-eminently an analytical science. We take languages as we find them, we trace them back to their earliest forms, and classify them, and then analyse every word till we arrive at elements which resist further analysis. These elements we call roots, and leave them, for the present, as ultimate facts. In tracing the upward growth of words we arrive at a stage where we can clearly see the branching off of a large number of meanings, springing from the same stem. And among these earliest ramifications we meet with a number of names familiar to us from what is called the mythology of ancient nations. We soon discover that these mythological expressions are by no means restricted to religious ideas, but that there is a period in the growth of language in which everything may or must assume a mythological expression. It was the object of the second volume of my Lectures on the Science of Language, to establish the fact that mythology, in its true sense, was an

inevitable phase in the development of the human mind, and that we could solve many of its riddles with the help of such indications as were supplied to us by a careful study of the general growth of language. I called this peculiar phase or affection of language a kind of disease, though, like many diseases, it ought really to be recognised as a recuperative crisis in the youthful constitution of the human mind. In some few cases only, to which, on account of their perplexing nature, I called particular attention, could mythology rightly be considered as a disease, as a premature hardening, so to say, of the organic tissues of language, namely, when a word had lost its original meaning, and was afterwards interpreted, or rather misinterpreted, in accordance with the ideas of a later age. I tried to work out this principle in a number of essays which formed the foundation of what is now called Comparative Mythology or the *Science of Mythology*. In spite of much opposition, arising chiefly from a failure on the part of my critics to understand the principles which I followed and to comprehend the objects I had in view, that *Science of Mythology* is now as firmly established as the *Science of Language*[1], and I can honestly say that nothing has strengthened my faith in it so much as a gallant and powerful charge lately made against it by a most learned and conscientious critic, I mean Professor Gruppe, in his *Griechische Culte und Mythen*, 1887. I shall often have to refer to this book in the course of my lectures, I shall often have to express my entire dissent from it; but, before we come to blows, I

[1] See A. Barth, *Bulletin de la Mythologie Aryenne*, in the *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, 1880, p. 109.

like thus publicly to shake hands with an antagonist who is learned, serious, honest, and honourable.

These mythological researches led me back naturally to the problem with which I had started, the problem of the origin and growth of religion. And here it was a similar summons to that which has brought me here to-day, namely, an invitation to deliver the first course of the Hibbert Lectures in London, in 1878, that enabled me to lay before a large public the principles of the *Science of Religion and Comparative Theology*[1], as applied to the origin and growth of religion in India.

It was while engaged in these researches that I began to feel the absolute necessity of our possessing trustworthy translations, not only of the Veda, but of all the Sacred Books of the East. I had by that time finished the edition of the Rig-veda and its commentary, and it was expected that I should publish a complete translation of it. But here I broke down, for reasons which those who know anything of the present state of Vedic scholarship will readily understand. The accumulation of material was too great for a single and no longer a young scholar. The one scholar in Germany who by his lexicographic labours would seem to have been best qualified for that task, Professor Roth, declared honestly that a translation of the Veda is a task not for this, but for the next century.

I had still many things to finish, and I felt the time had come for drawing in my sails. Having lectured for twenty-five years at Oxford, I thought I had a right to be relieved; nay, I felt it a duty

[1] *Hibbert Lectures*, Longmans, 1882.

to the University to make room for younger and more vigorous men. I then formed a small society, consisting of the best Oriental scholars in Europe and India, and we began to publish a series of translations of the *Sacred Books of the East*, which by this time amounts to thirty volumes, and will ultimately comprise forty-eight.

While engaged in conducting this undertaking, I felt it necessary, before resuming my study of religion, to define more clearly my own philosophical position. I had from the very first made it sufficiently clear, I thought, that to my mind language and thought were inseparable, that thought was language *minus* sound, instead of language being, as was commonly supposed, thought *plus* sound. It was from that point of view that I felt justified in treating mythology as I had done, namely, as an affection, or even as a disease, of language, and it was in the same sense that I had tried to read in the annals of language some of the secrets of the growth of religion. The common illusion that language is different from thought, and thought different from language, seemed to me one of the best illustrations of modern philosophical mythology; but I found that even professed philosophers clung to that myth with the same tenacity with which they cling to their belief in faculties and forces, as different from their manifestations. They had so little understood the fundamental principle on which my system rested, namely, the absolute coalescence of language and thought, that one of them, Professor Gruppe, published his large work on Mythology, chiefly in order to show that instead of explaining mythology as a peculiarity of language,

I ought to have explained it as a peculiarity of thought. What is one to say to this kind of criticism, which ignores, or rather runs its head against, the very walls of the fortress which it means to besiege? I thus was almost compelled to publish my last book, the *Science of Thought*, in which I collected all the facts that had been brought to light by the *Science of Language*, in support of a theory held by the most eminent philosophers from Plato to Hegel[1], namely, that *Logos* is the same thing, whether you translate it by language or by thought, and that as there is no language without reason, neither is there any reason without language.

I hope to treat this question more fully in some of my later lectures. At present I only wished to show what is the red thread which holds my literary work together, and to explain to you why, when I received the invitation to lecture on Natural Theology in this University, I felt that, if life and health were granted me, this was the very work I ought still to accomplish. I want, if possible, to show you how the road which leads from the Science of Language to the Science of Mythology and to the Science of Thought, is the only safe road on which to approach the *Science of Religion*. This Science of Religion will thus become the test, and I hope the confirmation, of previous theories on language, mythology, and thought; and the work which I began at Leipzig in 1843, will, if my life is spared, be brought to its final consummation in the Lectures which you have allowed me to give in the University of Glasgow.

The task with which you have entrusted me is

[1] See *Contemporary Review*, October, 1888: 'My Predecessors.'

enormous—far beyond the powers of any one man, and I know full well, far beyond my own powers. All I can promise you is to help to clear the ground and to lay the foundation; but to erect a building, such as Lord Gifford shadowed forth in his Last Will, to raise a temple wide enough, strong enough, high enough for all the religious aspirations of the human race, that we must leave to future generations —to younger, to stronger, and to better hands.

LECTURE II.

DEFINITION OF RELIGION.

Definition of Religion, why wanted.

IF the Science of Religion is to be treated as one of the natural sciences, it is clear that we must begin with a careful collection of facts, illustrating the origin, the growth, and the decay of religion.

But we shall find it impossible to do so, unless we first enter on a preliminary and, I must add, a somewhat difficult inquiry, namely, What is meant by *religion*. Unless we can come to a clear understanding on that point, we shall find it impossible to determine what facts to include, and what facts to exclude in collecting our evidence for the study of religion.

What then is *religion*? To many people this will sound a very easy question, as easy as the question, What is man? Practical people object to such questions, and consider any attempt to answer them as mere waste of time. Now it is quite true that there is a kind of public opinion, which for all ordinary purposes settles the meaning of words, and by which we may allow ourselves to be guided in the daily concerns of life. But in philosophical discussions this is strictly forbidden. What is philosophy but a perpetual criticism and correction of language, and the history of philosophy but a succession of new definitions assigned to old and familiar terms?

Great differences in defining Religion.

Besides, there is anything but agreement on the true meaning of religion. Most people, whatever their opinions might be on other points, would probably hold that religion must always have something to do with God or the gods. But even that is not the case. Buddhism, for instance, which is a creed professed by the largest number of human beings, recognises, as taught by Buddha Śâkyamuni, no god, or at all events no creator of the universe, and it has been held in consequence that Buddhism could not be called religion.

Is Buddhism a Religion?

Now it is quite true, we may so define religion that the name could not be applied to Buddhism; but the question is, who has the right so to narrow the definition of the word 'religion' that it should cease to be applicable to the creed of the majority of mankind? You see that the right of definition is a most sacred right, and has to be carefully guarded, if we wish to avoid the danger of mere logomachies. How often have I been asked, Do you call Buddha's religion a religion, do you call Darwin's philosophy philosophy, or Wagner's music music? What can we answer under such provocation, except, Define what you mean by religion, define what you mean by philosophy, define what you mean by music, and then, and then only, we may possibly come to an agreement as to whether Buddha's doctrines may be called religion, Darwin's writings philosophy, and Wagner's compositions music. I know full well that nothing irritates an adversary so much as to be asked for a definition; and yet it is well known, or ought to be well known, that defini-

tion formed the very foundation of the philosophy of the ancients, of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, while the absence of proper definitions has been and is still the curse of modern philosophy[1].

Definition of Definition.

But before we can give a definition of religion, we must first give a definition of definition itself, however pedantic such a request may appear.

There are at least three kinds of definitions, the *etymological*, the *historical*, and the *dogmatic*.

Etymological Definition.

Many people still imagine that an etymology is in itself a definition. This was an impression which prevailed widely in early times[2], before the true principles of etymology had been discovered; and it prevails even now, though there is no longer any excuse for it. Homer, for instance, is very fond of etymologies which are to account for the peculiar character of certain gods and heroes. Plato extends this practice even more widely, though he often leaves us in doubt whether he is really serious in his etymologies or not. You know how in his Cratylus (410) he derives ἀήρ, air, from αἴρειν, to raise, as the element which raises things from the earth; how he explains αἰθήρ, ether, as ἀειθεήρ, because this element is always running in a flux about the air (ἀεὶ θεῖ ἀέρα ῥέων). He derives θεοί, the gods, also from the same root θεῖν, to run, because he suspected, as he says[3], 'that the sun, moon, earth, stars, and heaven, which are still the

[1] See Mill, *Three Essays on Religion*, p. 4.

[2] Cf. Sâṅkhyatattvakaumudî, § 4; tannirvakanam ka lakshanam, 'the etymological interpretation is the definition.'

[3] Cratylus, 397 C.

gods of many barbarians, were the only gods known to the aboriginal Hellenes; and seeing that they were always moving and running, from this their running nature, they called them gods or runners; and afterwards, when they had discovered all the other gods, they retained the old name.' Others, such as the author of the *De Mundo*, wrongly supposed to be Aristotle, derived *αἰθήρ*, the ether, from *ἀεὶ θεῖν*, because it was always running and moving [1].

The Romans followed the example of the Greeks [2]. Poets like Lucretius and Ovid indulged in etymologies, whenever they seemed to agree with their opinions, and to the latest times Roman lawyers delighted in supporting their definitions of legal terms by more or less fanciful derivations.

In India also these etymological definitions were recognised from the earliest times. They are generally introduced in the following way: 'This is the saddle-hood of a saddle that we sit on it'; 'this is the road-hood of a road that we ride [3] on it'; 'this is the heaven-hood of heaven that it has been heaved on high.' Only, while these etymologies are historically correct, any etymology is welcome to the authors of the Brâhmaṇa or the Nirukta, if only it explains some meaning of the word.

In some cases these etymological definitions are very useful, but they require the greatest caution. First of all, many popular etymologies [4] are phonetically untenable and historically wrong. *God*, for in-

[1] *De Mundo*, ed. Didot, vol. iii. p. 628, l. 28; *διὰ τὸ ἀεὶ θεῖν*.

[2] Lersch, *Die Sprachphilosophie der Alten*, vol. iii; Cic. *Nat. Deor.* iii. 24.

[3] See *Academy*, Dec. 1888; also Plutarch, *Fragm.* 21, 27.

[4] Varro, *L. L.* v. 7, ed. Egger. 'Quattuor explicandi gradus: infimus is quo etiam populus venit. Quis enim non videt unde arenifodinae et viocûrus?' Lersch, l. c. vol. iii. p. 126.

stance, cannot be derived from *good*, because phonetic laws will not allow it, and because the two words run parallel, and never approach one another, as far as we can follow their history.

But even where an etymology is unassailable on phonetic and historical grounds, it can never give us more than the first starting-point of a word. It may teach us how the object to be named was first conceived, but no more. We know, for instance, that *deus* in Latin represents the Sanskrit *deva*, perhaps also the Greek θεός, though neither of these etymologies is in strict accordance with phonetic rules[1], and that *deva* meant originally, bright. This is extremely important as showing us that one of the many conceptions of the Divine started from the concept of bright and beneficent beings, such as sun, and moon, and stars, in opposition to the dark and deadly aspects of the night; but to imagine that this could help us to understand the concept of God in the mind of such a thinker as Pascal, would be absurd. We can never be too grateful, if we can discover the germinal idea of a word, if we can prove, for instance, that *deus* was originally no more than a bright being, that a *priest* was originally an *elder*, a *minister* a servant, a *bishop* an overseer; but if we were to give these etymologies as more than historical curiosities, and mistake them for definitions, we should only prove our ignorance of the nature of language, which is in a constant state of ebb and flow, and exhibits to us the process of continuous evolution better than any other part of nature.

[1] See *Selected Essays*, i. p. 215. I still hold to the opinions there expressed.

Historical Definition.

We now come to historical definitions. What I call an *historical* definition is an account of these very changes which take place in the meaning of a word, so long as it is left to the silent and unconscious influences which proceed from the vast community of the speakers of one and the same language. Thus an historical definition of *deus* would have to show the various changes which led from *deva*, bright, as applied to the sun, the dawn and other heavenly phenomena, to the *Devas*, as powers within or behind these heavenly bodies, and lastly to the beneficent agents in nature or above nature, whom the Hindus called *Devas*, and the Romans *dii*. As the biography of a man may be called his best definition, what I call biographies of words are perhaps the most useful definitions which it is in our power to give.

Dogmatic Definition.

Lastly come the *dogmatic* definitions, by which I mean definitions given on the authority of individuals, who, whatever a word may have meant etymologically, and whatever it may have come to mean historically, declare that, for their own purposes, they intend to use it in such and such a sense. This is chiefly done by philosophers, lawyers, and men of science, who feel unable to use important words with all the vagueness of their etymological and historical meaning, and determine once for all, generally by the old logical method of settling their genus and their specific difference, in what exact sense they *ought* to be employed in future.

Let us now see how these three kinds of definition

have been applied to the word with which we have to deal, namely *religion*.

Etymological Definition of Religio.

The etymological definition of religion has attracted considerable interest among theologians, owing to that kind of tacit persuasion that the etymology of a word must somehow or other help to disclose its real meaning. It is well known that Lactantius derived *religio* from *religare*, to bind or hold back, and he did so, not simply as a philologist, but as a theologian. 'We are born,' he says, 'under the condition that, when born, we should offer to God our justly due services, should know Him only, and follow Him only. We are tied to God and bound to Him (*religati*) by the bond of piety, and from this has religion itself received its name, and not, as Cicero has interpreted it, from attention (*a relegendo*)[1].'

Before we examine this etymology, it will be useful to give the etymology which Lactantius ascribes to Cicero, and which he is bold enough to reject. Cicero says: 'Those who carefully took in hand all things pertaining to the worship of the gods, were called *religiosi*, from *relĕgere*, — as neat people (*elegantes*) were so called from *elegere*[2], to pick out; likewise diligent people, *diligentes*, from *diligere*, to choose, to value, and *intelligent* people from *intel-*

[1] Lactantius, *Institut. Div.* iv. 28, 'Hac conditione gignimur, ut generati nos Deo justa et debita obsequia praebeamus, hunc solum noverimus, hunc sequamur. Hoc vinculo pietatis obstricti Deo et *religati* sumus; unde ipsa religio nomen accepit, non, ut Cicero interpretatus est, a relegendo.'

[2] Rather from a lost verb *elegare*.

ligere, to understand; for in all these words there is the meaning of *legere*, to gather, to choose, the same as in *religiosus*[1].

Let us first clear the ground of some statements which are repeated again and again, but which have really no foundation. It is often said that Varro[2] supports the etymology of Lactantius, but Varro simply treats of *lĕgere* and *lĕgio*, and thus supports indirectly the etymology of Cicero, rather than that of Lactantius.

Festus, again, if he is to be quoted at all as having given an etymology of *religio*, sides with Cicero, and not with Lactantius, for he says that people are called *religiosi* if they make a choice (*delectus*) of what has to be done or to be omitted in the worship of the gods, according to the custom of the state, and do not entangle themselves in superstitions[3].

Of later writers St. Augustin follows sometimes the one, sometimes the other derivation, as it suits his purpose; while among modern theologians it has actually been maintained that *religio* was descended from *religare* as well as from *relegere*, so as to combine the meanings of both[4].

From a purely philological point of view it cannot

[1] Cicero, *De Nat. Deor.* ii. 28, 'Qui autem omnia quae ad cultum deorum pertinerent diligenter retractarent et tamquam relegerent sunt dicti religiosi ex relegendo, ut elegantes ex eligendo, itemque ex diligendo diligentes, et intelligendo intelligentes. His enim in verbis omnibus inest vis legendi eadem quae in religioso.'

[2] Varro, *De ling. lat.* v. 68; ed. Egger. Legio, 'quod leguntur milites in delectu;' Nitzsch, *Studien und Kritiken*, i. p. 527.

[3] Festus, p. 236, 'Religiosi dicuntur, qui faciendarum praetermittendarumque rerum divinarum secundum morem civitatis delectum habent nec se superstitionibus implicant.'

[4] 'Relegendo se sentit religatum,' von Drey, as quoted by Nitzsch, l. c.

be denied that *religio* might have sprung from *religare* quite as well as from *relegere*. The ordinary objection that from *religare* we should have *religatio*, and not *religio*, has no real weight, for we find by the side of *opinari* such words as *opinio*, not *opinatio*, and *necopinus*; and by the side of *rebellare*, *rebellis* and *rebellio*. In *lictor* also, if it meant originally a man who binds the criminal, we should have to admit a root *ligere*, by the side of *ligare*.

The real objection to our deriving *religio* from *religare* is the fact that in classical Latin *religare* is never used in the sense of binding or holding back. In that sense we should have expected *obligatio*, or possibly *obligio*, but not *religio*. Cicero's etymology is therefore decidedly preferable, as more in accordance with Latin idiom. *Relegere* would be the opposite of *neglegere* or *negligere* [1], and as *neglegere* meant 'not to care,' *relegere* would naturally have meant 'to care,' 'to regard,' 'to revere' [2]. From a verse quoted by Nigidius Figulus from an ancient writer, and preserved by Gellius (iv. 9), we learn that *religens* was actually used, as opposed to *religiosus*. He said: *Religentem esse oportet, religiosus ne fuas*, 'it is right to be reverent, but do not be religious,' that is, superstitious [3].

[1] The change of *e* into *i* is historical. We find *neglego* and *negligo*, *intellego* and *intelligo*. The spelling with *e* is the old spelling, but there are modern compounds also which have always *e*, such as *perlĕgo*, *praelĕgo*.

[2] M. M. *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 22.

[3] *Gellius*, ed. Hertz, iv. 9. Adjectives in *osus* generally imply an excess, as *vinosus*, *mulierosus*. Thus Nigidius Figulus said: 'Hoc inclinamentum semper hujuscemodi verborum, ut vinosus, mulierosus, religiosus significat copiam quandam immodicam rei super qua dicitur. Quocirca religiosus is appellabatur qui nimia et superstitiosa religione sese alligaverat, eaque res vitio assignabatur.' 'Sed

The German word *Andacht*, literally thoughtfulness, then reverence, has sometimes been compared with *religio*, but there is a slight difference, for *Andacht* conveys the meaning of meditation rather than of regard and reverence.

There is one more etymological definition of religion which Gellius (iv. 9) ascribes to one Masurius Sabinus. He derived *religiosum*, in the sense of sacred, from *relinquere*, to leave or put aside, as something too sacred for ordinary purposes[1]. As phonetic laws would not allow of this derivation, we need not discuss it further.

So much for the etymology of *religio*, which in its first conception can only have meant respect, care, reverence.

Historical Definition of Religio.

We now come to what I called the *historical* definition, or what others might prefer to call an historical description of the fates of the word *religio*, while confined to its own native soil. Most words, particularly those which form the subject of controversies, have had a history of their own. Their meaning has changed from century to century, often from generation to generation; nay, like the expression of the human face, the expression of a word also may change from moment to moment. In one sense our historical definition may be called the biography of

praeter ista,' thus Gellius continues, 'quae Nigidius dicit, alio quodam diverticulo significationis, religiosus pro casto atque observanti cohibentique sese certis legibus finibusque dici coeptus.'

[1] 'Masurius autem Sabinus in commentariis quos de indigenis composuit, religiosum, inquit, est quod propter sanctitatem aliquam remotum ac sepositum a nobis est, verbum a relinquendo dictum, tamquam caerimonia a carendo.' *Gellius*, ed. Hertz, iv. 9.

a word, and if only it can be recovered with any approach to completeness, such a biography conveys to us more information than can be gathered from any logical or etymological definition.

So long as the word *religio* remains on Roman soil, all changes of meaning seem perfectly intelligible, if only we take into account the influence of those forces which determine the growth of meaning in all words. Afterwards, when the word *religio* is transferred from a Roman to a Christian atmosphere, from classical to mediæval Latin and the modern Romanic dialects, from popular parlance to technical theology, the case becomes different. We then enter on purely *dogmatic* or self-willed definitions, the natural growth of language seems arrested, and all we can do is to register the various meanings which have been assigned to the word *religion* by philosophers and theologians of authority and influence.

Tracing the history of *religio*, we find it used in Latin in its original and wider sense of regard or respect, in such expressions as *religio jurisjurandi*, reverence for an oath, as distinguished from *metus deorum*, fear of the gods[1].

Religio and *metus* occur frequently together, for instance, Cic. ii. in Verr. 4, 45, 101, *ut eam (cupiditatem) non metus, non religio contineret*, where we can translate the two words *metus* and *religio* by fear and awe, fear expressing the fear of men or of consequences, awe the fear of the gods It is said in another place that when the moon was suddenly eclipsed on a

[1] Cic. *Font.* ix. 30, 'An vero istas nationes religione jurisjurandi ac metu deorum immortalium in testimoniis dicendis commoveri arbitramini, quae tantum a ceterarum gentium more ac natura dissentiunt.'

clear night, the whole army was perturbed *religione et metu*, by awe and fear. Such expressions also as *religio est facere aliquid* do not refer to religious scruples[1] only, but to any qualms of conscience.

After a time, however, *religio* became more and more defined as the feeling of awe inspired by thoughts of divine powers. Thus Cicero[2] states, *religio est quae superioris cujusdam naturae quam divinam vocant curam caerimoniamque affert*, 'Religion is what brings with it the care and cult of some higher power which they call divine.' As we find here *religio* and *caerimonia* placed side by side, we find likewise *cultus* and *religio*[3] joined, the former expressing the outward, the latter the inward worship of the gods.

A distinction is soon made also between *religion* and *superstition*, as Cicero says, *nec vero superstitione tollenda*[4] *religio tollitur*, 'though superstition should be removed, religion is not.'

Lastly, *religio*, and also the plural *religiones*[5], became the recognised names of outward religious acts, of cult and ceremony. Thus Cicero[6] distinctly explains *religio* by *cultus deorum*, and he declares[7] that the religion of the Romans is divided into *sacra*,

[1] Liv. ii. 62, 'Ut numine aliquo defensa castra oppugnare iterum religio fuerit.'

[2] *Invent.* ii. 53, 161.

[3] Cic. *N. D.* i. 43, 121, 'Quis aut cultu aut religione dignas judicare (imagines).'

[4] *De Div.* ii. 72, 148.

[5] Cic. ii. *Verr.* v. 13, 34, 'Contra fas, contra auspicia, contra omnes divinas atque humanas religiones.'

[6] *N. D.* ii. 3, 8, 'Religione, id est cultu deorum, multo superiores.'

[7] *De Nat. Deor.* iii. 1, 'Quumque omnis populi Romani religio in sacra et auspicia divisa sit, et tertium adjunctum sit, si quid praedictionis caussa ex portentis et monstris Sibyllae interpretes haruspicesve monuerunt.'

sacrifices, and *auspicia*, observations of the flight of birds, to which a third part has been added, namely, when the interpreters of the Sibyl or the haruspices declared something for the sake of prophecy from *portenta* and *monstra*. The *auspicia* he supposes to have been founded by Romulus, the *sacra* by Numa. In another place he distinguishes superstition from religion, *quae deorum cultu pio continetur*[1], 'which consists in the devout worship of the gods.' We meet even with such expressions as *religio deorum immortalium*[2], i. e. the worship of the immortal gods.

So far we can watch the natural development of the word *religio* in Latin. It began with the meaning of care, attention, reverence, awe; it then took the moral sense of scruple and conscience; and lastly became more and more exclusively applied to the inward feeling of reverence for the gods and to the outward manifestation of that reverence in worship and sacrifice. There are some late writers who use *religio* in the sense of faith; for instance, Cassiodorus (died 562, A.D.), *Religionem cogere non possumus, quia nemo cogitur ut invitus credat*[3], 'We cannot force religion, for no one is ever forced to believe against his will': but in classical Latin *religio* never has that meaning.

Thus ends the biography of the word *religio*, so long as it lived its natural life, unchequered by technical definition. We can clearly see that what the Romans expressed by *religio* was chiefly the moral or practical, not the speculative or philosophical side of religion. The questions as to the

[1] *N. D.* i. 42, 117. [2] Cic. *Lael.* 25, 96.
[3] *Variarum Libri*, ii. 27.

existence, the character and powers of their gods, did not trouble their minds, so long as they were left to themselves; still less did they make their sense of moral obligation, which they called *religio*, dependent on their faith in the gods only. They had a feeling of awe in their hearts at the sight of anything that seemed to them overpowering and beyond the grasp of their senses and their understanding. They did not care much whence that feeling arose, but they called it *religio*, that is, considering, thinking twice, hesitating; that was enough for them. The idea that the gods had implanted that feeling in their hearts, or that a thing was wrong or right because the gods had forbidden or commanded it, did not occur to them, till they had come in contact with Greek philosophy. Their religion, if we may use that word in its later and far more general sense, was very much what Spinoza in his *Tractatus theologico-politicus* thinks that *practical* religion ought always to be, simple piety and obedience, as distinguished from philosophy and love of knowledge. The gods were accepted without any misgivings, their approval of what was right and good was taken for granted, and no further questions were asked. So great is the difference between *religio*, as understood by the Romans, and *religio* as commonly understood by us, that *religio Romana* would never have conveyed to Cato the idea of his knowledge of Jupiter, Mars, or Vesta, and the duties he owed to them, but rather that of ancient Roman piety. There is a well-known verse by Schiller:

'Which religion I have? There is none of all you may mention,
Which I embrace, and the cause? Truly, religion it is.'

Here he uses religion in the first line in a purely modern sense, in the second line in a truly classical sense. What he meant was that he was held back by awe, by reverence and humility, from deciding on the truth of any single form of faith, and this the Romans too might have called *religion*.

French has in some expressions retained the classical meaning of *religio*. In such a phrase as *Il a une religion inviolable pour sa parole* we recognise the Latin *religio jurisjurandi* [1].

Later meanings of Religio.

We now have to follow the word *religio* in its later wanderings. Transferred to a Christian soil, religion became really a foreign word, and as such had to be defined by those who used it, and chiefly by theologians and philosophers. We naturally look first to the Old and New Testament to see in what sense religion is used there. But in the translation of the Old Testament the word *religion* never occurs, and in the New Testament it occurs three times only; and in one of these passages the translation varies between religion and superstition. In the Acts of the Apostles, xxvi. 5, we read: 'I lived a Pharisee after the most straitest sect of our religion.' Here religion, in the Vulgate, *religio*, corresponds to the Greek *θρησκεία*, which means outward worship of the gods. In the Epistle of St. James (i. 26, 27), we have *θρησκεία*, religious worship, and the adjective *θρῆσκος*, which is rendered by religious, in the Vulgate by *religiosus*.

In the Epistle to the Galatians (i. 13, 14) the trans-

[1] See *Littré*, s.v. He also cites such expressions as *il a une religion et un zèle pour les interêts du roi*, or *il se fait une religion d'écouter les raisons.*

lation the 'Jews' religion' is meant to render the Greek Ἰουδαϊσμός, which is retained in the Vulgate as *Judaismus*. Lastly, in the Acts, xxv. 19, 'they had certain questions against him of their own *superstition*, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive,' we have in Greek δεισιδαιμονία, which really means the fear of the gods, and which the Vulgate translates rightly by *superstitio*, the Revised Version less correctly by *religion* [1].

In all these passages, what is intended by *religio*, as used in the Vulgate, is a system of religious belief and worship; no longer what was meant by *religio* in its classical sense. The nearest approach to *religio* in its original meaning is found in the Greek εὐσέβεια. The verb σέβομαι [2], expressed at first being awestruck, standing back with awe. Thus σέβας μ' ἔχει εἰσορόωντα meant 'awe holds me back while I behold.' It afterwards is used for reverence towards the gods. Thus εὐσέβεια Ζηνός is used by Sophocles (Electra, 1097) in the sense of reverence towards Zeus, and the same word with the preposition εἰς occurs in the sense of piety towards parents, as in Plato's Republic, 615 C, εὐσέβεια εἰς θεοὺς καὶ γονέας. After Homer we find σέβομαι used with the accusative, like *veneror*, for instance, σέβομαι θεούς, I worship the gods.

At first the Greeks used δεισιδαιμονία, fear of the

[1] Other Biblical expressions for religion are φόβος τοῦ θεοῦ, λατρεία, δουλεία. See E. Hatch, *Essays in Biblical Greek*, p. 45.

[2] Brugmann's derivation of σέβομαι and σέβας from Sanskrit tyag, to leave, is not tenable, on account of the difference of meaning; see Kuhn's *Zeitschrift*, xxv, p. 301. If an etymology must be given, I should connect σέβας with σοβέω, to scare away, and Sanskrit *kshubh*, to perturb. The transition of *ks* into *s* in Greek is irregular, but not without analogy; see Curtius, p. 696. In kshubh we should have to recognise a parallel form of kshabh. But this is very doubtful.

gods or of the demons, and *φοβεῖσθαι τὸ θεῖον*, to fear the divine power, in a good sense. But very soon *δεισιδαιμονία* was used in a bad sense, as superstition, so that Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (161–180, A. D.) speaks of *θεοσεβὴς χωρὶς δεισιδαιμονίας*, god-fearing without superstition[1].

Dogmatic Definitions.

We have now to consider the third class of definitions, which I called *dogmatic*. They differ from the etymological and historical definitions in that they give us the opinions of individuals, whether theologians or philosophers, who take upon themselves to say, not so much what religion *does* mean or *did* mean, but what it *shall* mean. There is generally something dictatorial in such definitions. I open the pages of a philosophical journal[2], and I find in close proximity the following definitions of religion: 'Religion is our recognition of the unity of nature, and teaches us to consider ourselves as parts of the whole; and who can doubt its strong influence upon all our conduct!' On the next page I read, 'Theology and Metaphysics have nothing to do with Morality,' and soon after, 'Religion has never been other than science, *plus* worship or emotion.'

We can hardly open a book without meeting with similar random definitions of religion. Religion is said to be knowledge, and it is said to be ignorance. Religion is said to be freedom, and it is said to be dependence. Religion is said to be desire, and it is said to be freedom from all desires. Religion is said to be silent contemplation, and it is said to be splendid

[1] *Εἰς ἑαυτόν*, lib. vi. § 30, ed. Gataker, p. 52.
[2] *The Open Court*, vol. i. pp. 978–981.

and stately worship of God. People take every kind of liberty with this old word. Young poets will tell you that poetry is their religion, young artists, that their religion is art, while it has been said of old that 'pure religion is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep yourselves unspotted from the world[1].'

We cannot contest the right of every one to define religion as he understands it. For see how the matter stands with regard to definition. We have the *etymological* meaning of religion, but that is not binding; and we have the various *historical* meanings of religion, and they again are not binding. What criteria then can we discover for testing the truth of what I call the *dogmatic* definitions of religion? Some are clearly far too narrow, others far too wide. Some are faulty in themselves, others prove deficient when we try to apply them to historical facts. We must examine the most important of them, and though such an examination, even of the most important definitions only, will no doubt occupy some time, we ought to remember how often a whole dialogue has been devoted by Plato to this kind of philosophical reconnoitring, and ought not to grudge the time which we have to devote to this preliminary inquiry.

Religion and Theology.

In conducting this inquiry we must be careful in the choice and use of our own words, and we must try, as far as possible, to use every word in one sense only. We must distinguish, for instance, between *religion* and *theology*, though these words have often

[1] Ep. St. James, i. 27.

been used promiscuously. By *religion* we should always understand the subject itself, by *theology* the study or science of that subject. This terminology, so far as the word theology is concerned, has prevailed ever since the time of Abelard, and there seems to be no reason for changing it.

The Greek word *theologos* was used originally in a different sense. Thus Homer and Hesiod were called *theologi* (Herodotus, ii. 53), not in the modern sense of theologians, but as conversant with the origin and history of the gods. Hesiod's Theogony might have been called his Theology, or, at all events, a part of it, and that name is applied to similar works, such as the Theology of Thamyris, and of Orpheus, who is specially called ὁ θεολόγος by the Neo-platonists[1]. Plato and Aristotle used *theology* in the sense of 'doctrine concerning Deity and Divine things,' λόγοι περὶ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ περὶ τῶν θειῶν.

In Latin *theologia* was taken by Varro in the sense of what we call religion, there being according to him three kinds of theology, the *mythical*, the *physical*, and the *civil*. The *mythical* theology contained the fables about the gods, and many things, we are told, contrary to the dignity of immortal beings. The *physical* theology was described by him as beyond the capacity of the vulgar, while he considered the *civil* theology, the received religion of Rome, as best for a good citizen to believe.

In Christian phraseology *theologos* meets us first as the name of the author of the Apocalypse, John the Divine, or the *theologos*. This name, however, we are told, was given to him, not simply because he was

[1] See Gruppe, *Die griechischen Culte*, pp. 632–637.

what we call a theologian, but because he maintained the divinity of the Logos. In the third and fourth centuries *theologos* is said to have meant usually one who defended that doctrine.

Later, and particularly during the middle ages, theology came to mean religious doctrine in general, as studied by theologians or priests, and Abelard's *Theologia Christiana* was meant to represent what was afterwards called *Summa theologiae*, a body of systematical knowledge concerning Christian religion [1].

Dogmatic and Practical Religion.

The fashion which prevailed for some time, particularly in Germany, of using *religion* in the sense of practical and moral religion, while reserving *theology* as a name of dogmatic religion, is objectionable, and can only create confusion. We may distinguish between *dogmatic* and *practical religion*, and we may equally distinguish between *dogmatic* and *practical* theology. But as a theologian is now always used in the sense of a man who studies religion professionally or who belongs to the faculty of theology, it will be best to reserve theology as a name of this study. A mere believer in the dogmas of any religion is not yet a theologian. I therefore propose to retain *religion* in its general sense, comprising both *dogmatic* and *practical* religion, and reserve *theology* as the name for a scientific study of both. This will prevent all misunderstanding, unless we prefer to drop the name of theology altogether, and replace it by the name of the *Science of Religion*.

[1] See Flint. in *Encyclop. Brit.* s.v. Theology.

Comparative Theology.

It is likewise a mere abuse of technical terms to speak of *Comparative Religion.* There is religion and there is a science of religion, just as there is language and a science of language. But no one would speak of Comparative Language; neither ought we to speak of Comparative Religion. It is different with mythology. Mythology may be used, not only for a collection of myths, but likewise for a scientific treatment of them, and in the latter sense therefore it would be correct to speak of Comparative Mythology.

We have thus far distinguished between:

Religion, *dogmatic* and *practical*, and
Theology, *dogmatic* and *practical.*

To some philosophers, and theologians also, such a division between practical and dogmatic religion seems objectionable, nay, impossible, because they maintain that morality cannot possibly exist without some belief in a divine, or, at least, a rational government of the world, and that dogma again would be useless, unless it became the motive of practical morality. This may be true, but we need not enter into that question at present, for by simply qualifying religion as either dogmatic or practical, we only distinguish, we do not separate; and without committing ourselves as yet to any opinion as to whether morality can exist without dogma or dogma without morality, we do no more by our nomenclature than admit the existence of a common element in both.

Schleiermacher's Definition of Religion.

Some philosophers, however, and particularly Schleiermacher, claim the right of using religion in a still

higher sense. They deny that religion is either dogmatic or moral; they deny also that a combination of dogma and morality would give us religion. They point out that when we say that a man is without religion, we do not mean simply that he does not believe in Judaism, Christianity, or any other form of faith, or declines to submit to their moral codes. We mean really that he is without any religious sentiment. Schleiermacher explains religious sentiment as being the immediate consciousness that all that seems finite is infinite, that all that seems temporal is eternal. 'To seek and find what is infinite and eternal in all that lives and moves, in all changes and chances, in all doing and suffering, in fact by an immediate sentiment to have and know life itself as the infinite and eternal life, that,' he says, 'is religion.'—'From that point of view, if once reached, all events become real miracles, all miracles become real events; all experience becomes revelation, all revelation experience.'—'If we do not see our own miracles around us, if we do not perceive within us our own revelations, if our soul does not yearn to draw in the beauty of the whole world and to be pervaded by its spirit; if in the highest moments of our life we do not feel ourselves impelled by the divine spirit and speaking and acting from our own holy inspiration, if we do not at least feel all that we feel as an immediate influence of the universe, and yet discover in it something that is our own, that cannot be imitated, but can prove its pure origin within ourselves, we have no religion.'

We shall have to consider this meaning of religion when we come to examine the Upanishads, the Ve-

dânta philosophy, the poetry of the Sufis, and the speculations of the mediaeval mystics; but it seems to me that it would be better if a different name could be assigned to what may be the highest height which religion can reach, but is nevertheless a complete transfiguration rather of human nature than a system of doctrines about the Divine, and a code of precepts inspired by our belief in the Divine. In German it is called *Religiosität*; in English *religiousness* or *devotion* might be used in the same sense.

Religion, either belief or body of doctrines.

We have still one remark to make with regard to the ordinary use of the word 'religion,' before we can feel ourselves properly equipped for grappling with the great historical definitions of religion which have to be examined. Like many terms of the same character, religion can be used either for our own intellectual possession of theoretic dogmas and moral principles, or as a name of a body of doctrines and precepts collected by authority, chiefly for the purpose of teaching these doctrines and practices. Thus we may say that a person has changed the Jewish for the Christian religion, that is to say, that he has changed his own religious convictions. But we may also say that a person is studying the Buddhist religion, either by reading the sacred books of the Buddhists or by watching the life of the Buddhists in Ceylon or China, without allowing these studies to exercise the least effect on his own convictions. This ambiguity can hardly be avoided, and we have to make allowance for it in all branches of knowledge. We speak of logic, meaning either the laws of thought as

we know and follow them ourselves, or a body of doctrines, contained in essays and manuals; and we shall have to bear in mind the same double meaning when we speak of religion.

A strict adherence to the terminology, as we have now explained it, will help us, I hope, to avoid many misunderstandings, and enable us at the same time to assign to each of the various definitions of religion its proper place.

LECTURE III.

EXAMINATION OF DEFINITIONS.

Natural and Revealed Religions.

MOST of the earlier definitions of religion which we shall have to examine, have reference to Judaism and Christianity only.

These two religions were considered, in Europe at least, as different in kind from all the rest, being classed as supernatural and revealed, in opposition to all other religions which were treated as not-revealed, as natural, and by some theologians even as inspired by the powers of evil.

In an historical study of religion, however, such a distinction is untenable[1], for we shall find that the claim of revelation or the assertion of a supernatural origin is by no means peculiar to Christianity and Judaism. Most of the great religions of the world were by their followers believed to have been revealed, and the arguments by which such a belief was supported are much the same among all theologians.

As the founders of most religions professed to teach what no eye had seen nor ear heard, they could not invoke the ordinary authorities for the truth of their doctrines, but had to appeal to supernatural sources of knowledge. And even in cases where the founders

[1] See Flint, *Theism*, p. 323.

themselves made no such claim, but took their stand on the testimony of the spirit of truth only, their followers would soon ascribe to them a higher authority, so as to render all questionings and all opposition to their doctrines impossible. This applies to all or nearly all religions, and the claim of a supernatural origin, so far from being exceptional, is really one of the most natural tendencies of natural religion.

The student of Comparative Theology therefore can claim no privilege, no exceptional position of any kind, for his own religion, whatever that religion may be. For his purposes all religions are natural and historical. Even the claim of a supernatural character is treated by him as a natural and perfectly intelligible claim, which may be important as a subjective element, but can never be allowed to affect the objective character of any religion.

Comparative Theology.

In that respect *Comparative Theology* has but followed the example of what used to be called *Natural Theology*, which was always defined as the study of religion, independent of revelation. It professed to comprise all that could be known of God by the aid of the human understanding alone. This system of natural religion, such as we find it elaborated, for instance, by Raymundus de Sabunde (or Sebonde), was intended at first to serve as an introduction only to revealed religion[1]. But it soon became independent,

[1] Thus we read in the *Theologia Naturalis sive Liber Creaturarum*, specialiter de homine et de natura ejus in quantum homo, et de his quae sunt ei necessaria ad cognoscendum seipsum et deum, et omne debitum ad quod homo tenetur et obligatur tum Deo quam proximo, Argentinae, 1496, 'Liber creaturarum est porta, via, janua, intro-

and Natural Religion, in its purity and reasonableness, threatened to excel all revealed religion. In the last century all religions began to be treated as sects, if not as corruptions, of Natural Religion, and a study which at first was looked upon as a powerful aid to faith, was afterwards discouraged as dangerous to the interests of true religion.

Natural Theology differed, however, from what is now called *Comparative Theology* in that it paid but scant attention to the historical religions of the world, framing its ideal of what natural religion ought to be, from the inner consciousness only.

But in the same way as towards the beginning of our century *General Grammar*, which taught what, according to the rules of logic, language ought to be, was replaced by *Comparative Grammar*, which showed what language really had been, the study of *Natural* or *General Theology* also had to make room for the study of *Comparative Theology*, or what may be called the *Science of Religions*, as distinguished from the *Science of Religion*. While *Natural Theology* treated of religion in the abstract, or of what religion might or should have been, *Comparative Theology* studies religions as they have been, and tries to discover what is peculiar to each and what is common to all, with a silent conviction that what is common to all religions, whether revealed or not, may possibly constitute the essential elements of true religion.

Modus cognoscendi et colendi Deum.

The first definition with which we have to deal, and which is perhaps the most widely accepted among

ductorium et lumen quoddam ad librum sacrae scripturae in quo sunt verba Dei, et ideo ille praesupponit istum.' (Titulus ccxii.)

Christian theologians, existed, as we shall see, with a very slight alteration, among non-Christian as well as among Christian theologians. In most theological manuals we find religion defined as *modus cognoscendi et colendi Deum*, 'a mode of knowing and worshipping God.'

Though accepted by most theologians as unobjectionable, this definition has not escaped criticism. It is said [1] that a definition should trace whatever has to be defined back to one *genus proximum*, not to two; that if religion is a mode of knowing God, well and good; but that it cannot be at the same time a mode of worshipping God. This may be true in logic, but what can we do if, as a matter of fact, the same name has been given to our knowledge as well as to our worship of God? In that case the definition of *religio* as *modus cognoscendi et colendi Deum* would at all events be historically correct. But that is not all. There are surely many concepts which have two sides, nay, which become complete only when we comprehend these two or more sides as sides of one and the same concept. We may define a triangle by its three angles as well as by its three sides. Our definition of logic becomes complete only if we define it both as a knowledge and as an art. Even while engaged in studying logic and gaining a knowledge of the laws of thought, we practise these very laws, while afterwards in practising the laws, we know also as logicians that we know them. It is the same in medicine, in law, and in most of what we call the applied sciences.

[1] This is powerfully stated by Teichmüller in his *Religionsphilosophie*, 1886, p. 16.

Knowledge and practice, ἐπιστήμη and τέχνη, are mostly inseparable.

And this really holds true in religion more than anywhere else. Is not religion as mere knowledge or faith said to be 'dead, being alone[1],' that is, being without works? And would not works, however perfect and useful, cease to be religions, if performed without a motive, without a knowledge of God?

Feeling or Knowledge as motive of action.

But we may even go a step further. All our acts are stimulated either by feeling or by knowledge, by percepts or by concepts. A feeling of pain makes us act in one way, a feeling of pleasure in another A mere perception of distance makes the crow fly direct, that is by the shortest road, and induces a peasant to cross a field diagonally, instead of laterally. A knowledge of geometry produces the same action, only lined with intelligence. An engineer does what the crow does, only he does it, not simply by intuition, but because he knows that the hypothenuse of any triangle is, nay, must always be, shorter than the two other sides together. In this way every act of ours may be shown, I believe, to be under the influence of either feeling or knowledge, and thus the active side of religion also could easily be shown to be inseparable from, though of course not identical with, the theoretic side.

The logical fault, therefore, of tracing religion to two *proxima genera* instead of one, if fault it be, would have its historical justification in the fact that active religion, whether worship or morality, is, in its beginning at all events, inseparable from religious

[1] Ep. James iii. 17.

knowledge, while in most cases religious knowledge would by its very nature lead to religious acts.

The object of religion must be defined.

There is, however, a much more serious difficulty in this definition, and this may best be discovered, if we examine the same definition as we find it in a very similar wording in the writings of a heathen philosopher, namely Seneca. He defines religion as *Cognoscere Deum et imitari*[1], 'to know God and imitate him.' Now let us remark that Seneca does not say, to know the gods and imitate them, but to know God and imitate him. We must indeed not lay too much stress on this, for it is well known how promiscuously philosophers of his age used *deus* either in the singular or the plural. Thus the same Seneca[2] says: 'I do not obey God, but I assent to him with all my heart; he worships the gods best who imitates them.' Now, if Seneca had in his definition of religion spoken of an imitation of the gods, we should probably have detected at once the serious fault which his definition shares in common with that of our own theological manuals. We shall see that in defining religion, both definitions leave the most important part, namely, the object of religion, undefined. If Seneca had explained religion as a knowledge and imitation of Mars, Bacchus, or Venus, we should have said at once, But how do you know that there are such beings as Mars, Bacchus, or Venus? What do you know about their character and their proceedings,

[1] Imitation of God had been prescribed by Pythagoras also, and with some restriction (as far as nature permits) by Plato.

[2] *Epist.* i. 95, 96, 'Non pareo Deo, sed adsentior ex animo; satis coluit Deos quisquis eos imitatus est.'

and why do you advise us to imitate them? The flaw which in Seneca's definition of religion would thus have become palpable at once, can hardly escape notice in the Christian adaptation of it. If the object of religion, if what is to be known and to be worshipped, can thus be taken for granted and left undefined, by simply calling it God, we might with the same right explain physical science as a knowledge of nature, or moral science a knowledge of good and evil, without stating what we mean by nature, or what we understand by good and evil. Such definitions would be pure tautology. If we once know what we mean by god or gods, the definition of religion becomes easy enough. But the discovery and elaboration of the name and concept of gods and god, form really the most important and the most difficult chapter in the history of religion, and to take that fundamental element of religion as simply granted, is to overlook the most difficult part in a definition of religion.

It will be easily seen, however, that nearly all definitions of religion, and particularly those of modern philosophers, take the object of religion for granted, or explain it by terms which themselves stand in need of definition. Plato naturally does not like to speak of gods in the plural, but when he uses instead, *the Divine*, τὸ θεῖον, he ought to have defined it. Of modern philosophers Schleiermacher used the Infinite, instead of God; Professor Pfleiderer speaks of the world-controlling Power; Dr. Martineau in his recent work on Religion of the Divine Mind and the Divine Will, or even of the Unknown; and the author of the *Philosophy of Religion*, your own honoured Principal,

defines religion as a surrender of the finite will to the infinite will.

If we were all agreed on the meaning of these terms, the Divine, the Infinite, the Unknown, the world-controlling Power, the infinite Will, no formal objections could be taken to these definitions. But our antagonists will not allow us to take any of these terms for granted, or as requiring no definition.

If religion is knowledge, they say, does not all depend on what we know? If religion is belief, must we not ask, first of all, what it is that we are to believe, or how our mind got possession of the concept and name of divine beings that are to be believed? Let religion be fear or love, worship or meditation, its essential character must always be determined by the object to which it looks. If we call that object God, does that tell us anything, so long as it is left uncertain what is meant by God, whether something visible or invisible, something comprehensible or incomprehensible, something that can be named or something that must for ever remain nameless? How often in the religious battles of the world do we hear the combatants say, What you call God, I deny to be God. If you call me an atheist, I call you an idolator.

Fichte on Atheism.

When Fichte was accused of atheism, what did he reply: 'Your God,' he said, 'is the giver of all enjoyment, the distributor of all happiness and of all unhappiness among human beings. That is his real character. But he who wants enjoyment is a sensual, carnal man, who has no religion, and is incapable of religion. The first *truly* religious sentiment kills all desire within us. A god who is to serve our desires,

is a contemptible being, an evil being, for he supports and perpetuates human ruin and the degradation of reason. Such a god is in truth the prince of this world, who has been condemned long ago through the mouth of truth. What they call God, is to me not-God. They are the true atheists; and because I do not accept their not-God as the true God, they call *me* an atheist.'

Goethe and Lavater.

And even in a more friendly encounter, as that between Goethe and Lavater, we see how entirely what the one and the other called religion was determined by the object to which their religion was directed. 'To recognise God wheresoever and howsoever he reveals himself, that is true blessedness on earth,' Goethe says, and he would call that true religion. His friend Lavater, on the contrary, could see the Divine revealed in one person only, in Christ, so that his personal religion consisted, as he declared, in his own soul being hid in Christ.

All definitions of religion, therefore, in which the object of religious knowledge or reverence or love is left undefined, may indeed interest us as throwing light on the relation between the subject and the object of religion, between man and what is called God, but they can hardly claim the title of a formal and complete definition, in the recognised sense of that term.

Different classes of Definitions.

We can best examine some of the most important and instructive definitions of religion by classing them, not according to the subject of religion, which

is always man, or according to the object, which is called by various names, but according to the *form* in which this relation between man and God is supposed to manifest itself.

Most definitions may be arranged under two heads, in so far as they lay the chief stress either on the *practical* or on the *theoretical* side of religion. Let us begin with the former.

Practical Religion.

The old scholastic definition, according to which religion is 'the chain of conscience by which we feel ourselves bound to the Godhead in all we think and will and do [1],' refers to the practical side of religion, to what has been called our conscience or the voice of God within us, so far as it regulates our actions.

Kant.

It is well known that Kant took a similar view of religion. 'Religion,' he wrote, '(as subjective) consists in our recognising all our duties as divine commandments [2],' or, 'in our regarding God as the universally to be revered lawgiver for all our duties [3].' He is very careful, however, to exclude mere cultus or worship from the sphere of religion, and he declares that any attempt to please the Deity by acts which by themselves have no moral value, by mere external worship, is not religion, but simply superstition [4].

Caird.

We must likewise class here the definition of religion given by the author of the *Philosophy of*

[1] 'Conscientiae vinculum, quo cogitando et volendo et agendo numini nos obstrictos sentimus.' Ammon, *Summa Theolog. Christ.* § 1.
[2] *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 14.
[3] *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, p. 139.
[4] *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 18.

Religion, though it aims at a higher phase of religious morality than that of Kant. According to him, 'Religion is the surrender of the finite will to the infinite, the abnegation of all desire, inclination, volition that pertains to me as this private individual, the giving up of every aim or activity that points only to my exclusive pleasure and interest, the absolute identification of my will with the will of God[1].

Pfleiderer.

A similar thought underlies the definition which Professor Pfleiderer has given in the second edition of his excellent work *Die Religionsphilosophie*[2], of which an English translation is now in course of publication, or has lately been completed. 'Religion,' he writes, 'is the relation of our life to the world-controlling Power, which is to become a community of life with it[3].' 'Relation of our life to the world-controlling Power' is only a more generalised conception of what Dr. Caird has called the surrender of the finite will to the infinite. But the highest object of religion is conceived as the same by both philosophers, 'the community of life with the world-controlling Power' being evidently intended by Pfleiderer for what Dr. Caird calls 'the absolute identification of my will with the will of God.'

The difficult point, however, in all these definitions of religion as the submitting of our will to the will of God, seems to me this—that they leave unexplained

[1] Caird, *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 296.
[2] Pfleiderer, vol. ii. p. 29.
[3] It is almost impossible to render the exact meaning in English. 'Der gemeinsame Kern der Religion in allen ihren Formen ist jene Lebensbeziehung auf die weltbeherrschende Macht, welche zur Lebensgemeinschaft mit ihr werden will.'

our knowledge of the will of God, nay, even our knowledge of the existence and character of what we call God.

Martineau.

Nor is much light thrown on that dark point if we simply substitute belief for knowledge. In his recent work, *On the Study of Religion*, Dr. Martineau defines religion as 'a belief in an Ever-living God, that is, a Divine Mind and Will, ruling the Universe and holding moral relations with mankind.' Here 'a belief in an Ever-living God' has as much to be accounted for as a knowledge of God, and the definition of God as a Divine Mind and Will would likewise call for an historical justification. If a definition of religion could be silent on these points, or could take man's knowledge of God and of the will of God, or man's belief in a Divine Mind and Will, for granted, all difficulties would certainly seem to vanish. But a glance at the history of religion teaches us that we should thus leave unexplained those long periods during which the human mind, after many struggles, arrived at last at the abstract and sublime conception of a Divine Mind and a Divine Will. If religion has become, as no doubt it has in many minds, a complete submission to the will of God, such submission must, in the beginning, at all events, have been preceded by an intellectual struggle which left behind as its result such concepts and names as '*God*' and '*the will of God.*' Man's readiness to submit to the will of God would be inconceivable without a previous concept of God which justified such submission and rendered it intelligible. All definitions, therefore, of religion as

simply practical, and particularly that of Kant, seem to me like the definition of a fruit-bearing tree, which should ignore its invisible roots.

Schenkel and Newman.

In order to avoid this difficulty of taking the concept of God for granted in our definition of religion, and making our conscience the *vinculum* with something unknown or undefined, some theologians maintain that our conscience is the very faculty which gives us an immediate knowledge of God, and wish us to accept conscience as the religious organ of the soul. In Germany this view has been eloquently defended by Dr. Schenkel, in England by John Newman, who has always pointed to conscience as the creative principle of religion. Still we gain but little for a better definition of religion by adopting this opinion, which may be quite true as a matter of personal experience in the nineteenth century, but which fails to remove the historical difficulty, how from the earliest times the human understanding elaborated the idea of the Godhead, and thus and thus only made religion a possibility [1].

Theoretical Religion.

Equally defective, however, are the other definitions of religion, which I call *theoretical*, as opposed to *practical*. They seem to look to the invisible roots only, and forget the tree and the fruit which these roots were meant to support and to nourish. Without its practical results, nay, without its practical purposes, religion would never have been religion.

[1] See Professor Flint's remarks in his Baird Lectures on *Theism*, p. 210.

It might have been theory or dogma, it might have grown into a system of philosophy, but never into a religion, whether manifested by outward worship or by inward piety.

Religion as sentiment or knowledge.

Most philosophers in attempting to define religion in its theoretic character, have explained it as a sentiment; few only as simple knowledge, like all other knowledge. Even in ancient times, sentiments, particularly the sentiments of fear or admiration or reverence, were supposed to form the very essence of religion. Fear, the ancients declared, made the gods, and even in modern Christian phraseology, the fear of God, *Gottesfurcht*, φόβος θεοῦ, are often used as synonymous with religion.

Lotze.

Lotze, whose views on the philosophy of religion deserve far more serious consideration than they have hitherto received, particularly in England, combines the sentiments of fear and reverence in his definition of religion, and adds to them a third, namely the sentiment of moral goodness.

Religion, he says, consists, (1) Of personal feelings of *fear*, of complete dependence on unknown powers, which form a motive leading man to seek comfort in a view of the world not supported by experience.

(2) It consists of *aesthetic* feelings, which surrender themselves in admiration to the Beautiful, and lead to the erection of an ideal world.

(3) It consists of *moral* feelings, which lead to an

attempt to construct such a system of the universe as should in turn make them (our moral feelings) intelligible [1].

Author of Natural Religion.

The author of *Natural Religion*, whoever he may be, lays the chief stress on the sentiment of admiration, defining religion as a habitual and permanent feeling of admiration.

Goethe.

Goethe preferred reverence instead of admiration, though he speaks of the result rather than of the nature of religion. 'A threefold reverence,' he writes, 'has to be called forth in man by religion: a reverence for what is above, for what is around, and for what is beneath us. The last is the most difficult, and has been realised by Christianity only, because it alone has been able to recognise even misery and poverty, scorn and contempt, shame and disgrace, suffering and death as divine; nay to honour and cherish even sin and crime, not as impediments, but as helps to the Saint.'

Mill.

Mill also, in his *Three Essays on Religion*, published after his death, in 1874, would seem to trace back religion to a feeling of admiration, or, as he expresses it, to a craving for an ideal object. 'So long as human life is insufficient,' he writes, 'to satisfy human aspirations, so long there will be a craving for higher things which finds its most obvious satisfaction in religion.' And again: 'The essence of

[1] By some accident the opinions of Lotze were in the first edition ascribed to Teichmüller, whose recent death has been felt as a severe loss by all students of religious philosophy.

religion is the strong and earnest direction of the emotions and desires towards an ideal object, recognised as of the highest excellence, and as rightfully paramount over all selfish objects of desire[1].'

After having examined these two classes of definitions, which look exclusively to either the practical or the theoretical side of religion, we have still to say a few words on the views taken of religion by one of the most theological of philosophers, Spinoza, and by one of the most philosophical of theologians, Schleiermacher.

Spinoza, 1632–77.

Though Spinoza defines true religion and piety as love of God, founded on a knowledge of his divine perfections—a definition with which Leibniz seems to agree—yet he considers that with us practical religion should come first, should in fact remain the only religion for the majority of mankind, while a higher and philosophical faith should be reserved for the few. What Spinoza means by practical religion, is simple obedience to divine commands, while the higher religion consists in the intellectual love of God, inseparable from a true philosophical knowledge of God and man, and leading to that true blessedness which arises from the consciousness of our own God-given powers. The former he considers as based entirely on sacred books and historical revelation, the latter on the highest knowledge which can only be the work of our own mind. The former ought to be beneficial, the latter ought to be true; the former is to serve for the public good, the latter is to lead to that peace and

[1] *Three Essays*, p. 104.

love of God, which passeth all understanding. Spinoza's view of religion does not in this respect differ much from that of the Brâhmans. As they look upon the first and second period in a man's life as a discipline to subdue our human passions and weaknesses, Spinoza too expects practical religion to curb the passions and thus to prepare man for a higher life. Only after this has been achieved is the mind prepared for a purer light. In India this progress from a lower to a higher religion was supposed to take place in the same individual, when passing through the four stages of his life, the four âsramas. In Spinoza's time, and in the society by which he was surrounded, such a hope was impossible. Few only might find the way to the highest beatitude; but even for those who rested half-way, practical religion supplied, as Spinoza thought, all those comforts which human nature requires in every stage of its growth.

This was the man who not more than 200 years ago was considered the most dangerous heretic by his Jewish co-religionists.

Schleiermacher, 1768–1834.

Let us now hear what Schleiermacher has to say on religion, he who has likewise been spoken of as a most dangerous heretic by his Christian co-religionists. I mentioned already that he recognised true religion neither in thoughts nor in deeds, nor in both combined, but rather in a certain disposition or tone or character of the whole man, in what is called in German *religiöse Stimmung*. Religion was to him a kind of music pervading all our sentiments, our thoughts and our

acts. 'Religion,' he says[1], 'is neither knowing nor doing, but an inclination and determination of our sentiments, which manifests itself in an absolute feeling of dependence on God.' Or again: 'Religion consists in our consciousness of absolute dependence on something which, though it determines us, we cannot determine in turn[2].'

He tries to describe this feeling or this disposition and inclination of the mind or the heart in ever varying expressions. He calls it 'a sentiment, sense, taste of the Infinite.' In his Second Discourse on Religion, he is anxious to show that religion is neither metaphysics nor ethics, nor a mixture of both, though something of each is mixed up with all positive religions. 'Religion is not knowledge, because the measure of knowledge is not the measure of piety. Observation may be said to belong to religion, but the observation of religion is different from that of science. It does not aim at knowing the finite in relation to the infinite, nor the nature of the highest cause by itself, or in relation to finite causes. It strives to view the universe, to watch it reverently in its own manifestations and acts, and to let itself be grasped and filled in childlike passivity by its immediate influences. Religion is the immediate consciousness of all that is finite within the infinite, of all that is temporal within the eternal.'

'This intuition, however,' he adds, 'without sentiment would be nothing, and cannot have either the right origin or the right force. Sentiment also without intuition would be nothing, and both together are

[1] *Christliche Glaubenslehre*, § 3. [2] *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 19.

something only when they are undivided, and because they are originally undivided.'

Hegel, 1770–1831.

In opposition to this sentiment of dependence and devotion which, according to Schleiermacher and his numerous disciples, constitutes the essential character of religion, Hegel defines religion as perfect freedom. If the sense of dependence constituted religion, he says, the dog might be called the most religious animal[1]. Religion, with Hegel, is perfect freedom; it is in fact the Divine Spirit as becoming conscious of Himself through the finite spirit. Or again, 'Religion is the knowledge acquired by the finite spirit of its essence as absolute spirit.'

Fichte, 1762–1814.

With equal boldness does another philosopher, Fichte, define religion, not as sentiment, but as knowledge. 'Religion is knowledge,' he says. 'It gives to man a clear insight into himself, answers the highest questions, and thus imparts to us a complete harmony with ourselves, and a thorough sanctification to our mind[2].'

[1] What was considered a rather coarse joke of Hegel's has now become a serious doctrine. 'The feeling of religious devotion,' Darwin writes, 'is a highly complex one, consisting of love, complete submission to an exalted and mysterious superior, a strong sense of dependence, fear, reverence, gratitude, hope for the future, and perhaps other elements. No being could experience so complex an emotion until advanced in his intellectual and moral faculties to at least a moderately high level. Nevertheless we see some distant approach to this state of mind in the deep love of a dog for his master, associated with complete submission, some fear, and perhaps other feelings.' M. Houzian (*Etudes sur les Facultés Mentales des Animaux*, pp. 271–273) thinks that there are many persons and even peoples not so religious as dogs.' The monkeys of the Sunda Isles, we are told, gather shortly before sunrise in the highest tree-tops, and salute the rising sun with clamorous shouts. *Open Court*, 1889, p. 1458.

[2] *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 15. We must here remember that *knowledge*

How to account for these different definitions.

It may seem difficult to understand how it is possible that men whose knowledge and whose honesty of purpose admit of no doubt should have arrived at such different, nay contradictory, definitions of religion. How could Schleiermacher see in religion absolute dependence, when Hegel perceives in it the most absolute freedom? How could Fichte define religion as the highest knowledge, while Agnostics in ancient as well as in modern times have represented the object of religion as beyond the sphere of human knowledge? Such contradictions have often been pointed out and made use of in order to prove the vanity of all human knowledge, or, at all events, the futility of philosophy, when applied to religious problems. But there is no reason to despair. I believe that the Science of Thought, as based on the Science of Language, supplies a solution to this as to many other riddles of philosophy. There is but one solution for them all, and this consists in our defining the words which we use in philosophical discussions.

At first sight dependence seems indeed the very opposite of freedom; but we have only to define dependence as trust, and then dependence or trust in God as the wisest, the most perfect and most power-

has been used in very different senses, varying from mere acquaintance with a subject to a perfect understanding of it. Thus while most theologians use belief as different from or even as opposed to knowledge, Dr. Flint, in his Lectures on *Theism* (p. 86, Appendix X, On Intuition, Feeling, Belief, and Knowledge in Religion), declares that 'belief is inseparable from knowledge, and ought to be precisely co-extensive with knowledge.' This may throw light on the real intention of his definition of religion. 'Perhaps,' he says, 'if we say that religion is man's belief in a being or beings, mightier than himself and inaccessible to his senses, but not indifferent to his sentiments and actions, we have a definition of the kind required.' (*Theism*, p. 32.) But can belief in what is inaccessible to our senses be rightly called knowledge?

ful Being, is changed at once into a perfect consensus or accord with the will of God, nay into perfect and unhesitating atoneness with even His most inscrutable counsels. So long as man stands face to face to God, conscious only of his own physical weakness and of the overwhelming power of what is above, and beneath, and around him, he may feel himself dependent only, a creature, a slave, a mere nothing; but when he has discovered the omnipresence of the Divine, not only without but within himself, then that feeling of dependence is inevitably changed into a feeling of union, trust, and love, and he begins to understand what was called of old the liberty of the children of God.

So again, when the Agnostic says that we cannot know God, when he calls God the Unknown, nay even the Unknowable, he is perfectly right so long as he uses the verb *to know* in its ordinary sense. *To know*, in its ordinary sense, means first to perceive through the senses, and then to conceive by means of language. All our phenomenal knowledge is such and cannot be otherwise. *Nihil est in intellectu quod non ante*, or rather, *quod non simul fuerit in sensu*[1]; and *nihil est in intellectu quod non simul fuerit in lingua*. Now to know the Divine by this knowledge, by the same knowledge with which we know a stone, or a tree, or a dog, would be tantamount to annihilating the Divine. A known God, in that sense, would *ipso facto* cease to be God. It would become a phenomenal object, an idol, if you like, or a fetish, or a totem, but not what *we* mean by God. *Scitur Deus nesciendo.*

[1] This saying, commonly ascribed to Locke, I have traced back to Sir Thomas Bodley. I have seen it quoted also by M. Morus, in a letter to Descartes, March 5, 1649 (Descartes, *Œuvres*, vol. x. p. 213), as *cet axiome d'Aristote, il n'y a rien dans l'intellect qui n'ait passé par les sens.*

But as soon as we recognise that the very concept of *phenomenal* is impossible without the correlative concept of the *noumenal*, or, in other words, that there can be no appearance without something that appears, and, behind its appearance, is or exists by and in and for itself; as soon as we have learnt to recognise the invisible in the visible, the eternal in the temporal, the infinite in the finite, the Divine Presence in nature and in man, then we can understand what Fichte meant when he called religion the highest knowledge, for it is religion in its truest sense which opens our eyes and makes us perceive the noumenal in the phenomenal, the supernatural in the natural, and thus changes the very veil of nature into a never-ceasing revelation of the Divine. All religions may be called endeavours to give expression to that sense of the real presence of the Divine in nature and in man. Philosophers called that sense the *sensus numinis*, and when the ancient Greeks said that 'all things are full of the gods[1], whatsoever appears before our sight, or our hearing, or any other sense,' they meant what we mean, that by knowing the finite we know the infinite, by knowing nature we know God, by knowing ourselves we come to know the Highest Self, that Self which poets and prophets have called by many names, but which, by its very essence, is and must be above all names, the Unknown, in one sense, and yet the fountain of all knowledge, in the truest sense of the word.

[1] Διὸ καὶ τῶν παλαιῶν εἰπεῖν τινες προήχθεσαν ὅτι πάντα ταῦτά ἐστι θεῶν πλέα τὰ καὶ δι' ὀφθαλμῶν ἐνδαλλόμενα ἡμῖν καὶ δι' ἀκοῆς καὶ πάσης αἰσθήσεως. Arist. ed. Didot, iii. p. 636, l. 38. *De Mundo*, cap. vi. Cf. Plato, Legg., 899 (Jowett, v. 470).

LECTURE IV.

Positivist Definitions of Religion.

BESIDES the definitions which we have hitherto examined, and which all proceed from men who took an historical and impartial view of religion, there is another class which betray a decidedly polemical spirit, and which proceed chiefly from what are called positivist philosophers. Even they cannot deny that religion has a deep foundation in human nature, but they look upon it as a mistake, as a disease, as something that ought not to be, and they ascribe its origin, not to the noblest, but rather to the meanest and most selfish motives of our human nature.

Wundt.

Professor Wundt, for instance, a most eminent German physiologist and psychologist, declares that all percepts and sentiments become religious as soon as they have reference to some ideal existence which can supply the wishes and requirements of the human heart [1]. It cannot be denied that this is one side of religion; but it is not the whole of it, nor would it be true to say that all wishes, even the most selfish and sordid, were ever supposed to receive their fulfilment from that ideal existence which is postulated by religion.

[1] Teichmüller, *Religionsphilosophie*, xxxiii; Gruppe, *Die Griechischen Culte und Mythen*, 1887, p. 246.

Feuerbach.

Feuerbach was more decided still, and declared that the gods were nothing but the wishes of men, conceived as realised. But there are wishes and wishes, and even admitting that some of the ancient gods. represented the very lowest wishes of men realised, there would be others also, representing the realisation of the highest ideals which the human mind can conceive.

Generally speaking, positivist philosophers have added little to an historical study of religion. They have told us, not so much what religion has been, as what, according to their view of the development of the human mind, it ought or it ought not to have been.

Gruppe.

There is one exception, however. In a decidedly learned work, published in 1887, *Die Griechischen Culte und Mythen*, Professor Gruppe has put forward a view of religion which deserves the most careful consideration, and which I, at all events, cannot pass over in silence, considering that the greater part of his first volume, consisting of more than 700 pages, is directed against myself. His book is certainly instructive, and though I differ from Professor Gruppe on almost every point, I cannot but admire his learning, nor should I ever wish for a better and more valiant antagonist. Let us hear then the worst that can be said of religion.

Selfishness the Source of Religion.

According to Dr. Gruppe, who may well be taken as the most powerful representative of the extreme

positive and, at the same time, negative school of philosophy, religion exists simply because it satisfies certain selfish instincts of man. It has no other *raison d'être*. The rapid spreading of religion all over the world is likewise ascribed to a social instinct which is supposed to be gratified by certain advantages which all religions provide. Religions, we are told, do not only give pleasure, but they enable the individual members of a society to develop their faculties far better than the mere laws of family and state would allow. By an inner bond of thought and feeling which unites a religious community, the individual gains more power of resistance in the struggle of all against all. It is only because it answers these requirements of society that religion flourishes. It keeps the poor and miserable quiet by promising them pleasures in the world to come, and thus enables the rich and noble to enjoy their pleasures on earth in safety. It alone can strengthen law and morality in a state of society where there is no equality, and it would probably cease to exist altogether, if all inequalities on earth could be removed. Without accusing the founders of religion of selfish motives in the lowest sense, Professor Gruppe is nevertheless convinced that they were all unconscious egotists. They enjoyed the reverence shown them by the multitude to that extent that they did not shrink, as he thinks, even from a martyr's death. But generally, while professing to found a new kingdom of heaven, they succeeded in founding a kingdom of this world.

The three true causes of the wide and rapid spread of religion are therefore (l.c., p. 273), according to him—

(1) the unconscious vanity of its founders,

(2) a belief in the happiness which it procures to its believers, and

(3) the substantial advantages which society derives from it.

This would really, so far as I can judge, leave the question of the origin of religion in the mind of its founders unsolved; but this, we are told, is of little consequence, for the mere fancy of any single individual would have answered the purpose. Besides, it is asserted (p. 276) that all historical religions presuppose older religions, and are reformations rather than original intellectual creations, while the first conception of religious thought required no more than a high degree of personal energy to induce people to believe what was irrational, and to do in their primitive sacrifices what was absurd. Here, again, however, the question why any single individual should have invented what was so utterly irrational, remains unanswered.

Professor Gruppe's formal definition of religion I must give in his own words:—

'We call religious belief a belief in a state or in a being which, properly speaking, lies outside the sphere of human striving and attainment, but can be brought into this sphere in a particular way, namely, by means of sacrificial ceremonies, prayers, penances and self-denial. It might seem possible that on the strength of such a belief an individual should simply for his *own* benefit invent means by which such a possibility could be realised. But in history the religious belief always meets us as a doctrine, professing to be able to produce the union with those beings,

and the attainment of that state for a large number of men. Such a doctrine we call religion.'

His definition too narrow.

You see that it would be difficult to take a lower view of religion. However, as I remarked before, everybody is at liberty to give his own dogmatic definition of religion. The only question is whether the definition given by Professor Gruppe, and eagerly adopted by those who claim the name of positivist philosophers, comprehends really all that in the history of the world has been comprehended under the name of religion. That there have been, and that possibly there are even now, human beings to whom religion is nothing but disguised selfishness, may be true; but that there have been, and that possibly there are even now, human beings willing and able to surrender their own will to a Divine Will, can hardly be doubted even by Professor Gruppe. His definition of religion is therefore at all events too narrow, and it might possibly be found to apply to religion, not in its original, but in its most depraved state; not as conceived by the founders of religion and by those who were found willing to become martyrs to their convictions, but as adopted by those who under the cloak of religion were bent on gratifying the lowest passions of human nature. On this point Professor Gruppe is not quite explicit, and we must wait for the appearance of his next volumes, before we can believe that the impression left on our mind by his first volume is really quite correct.

So far as he has gone at present, his argument seems to be this, that religion is something so irra-

tional, not to say, so absurd, that it could have been invented once and once only in the whole history of mankind. He denies altogether that religion is a general characteristic of man, and that there is any excuse for it either in human nature or in its surroundings. Once, or possibly twice only, he maintains, did such a paradox as religion enter into the heart of man. All similarities therefore which have been discovered between religions are ascribed by Professor Gruppe to an historical transmission, which began probably not much earlier than the seventh century B.C. We are not told as yet where and when this monstrous birth took place, but everything seems to point to Phoenicia, or possibly to India (l. c., p. 499). We are given to understand in several places that the Nile has borrowed from the Ganges, not the Ganges from the Nile (pp. 499, 502, 507). The greater antiquity of the Egyptian literature is questioned again and again, and in Babylon also no trustworthy dates are admitted before the seventh century (p. 345). That missionaries could have travelled to Greece, Italy, and Central Europe from the South is said to be proved by discoveries of articles dropped on their journeys by early commercial caravans. That Eastern Asia, China, and Japan could have been reached by early missionaries from India, is said to be proved by the success of Buddhist missionaries at a later time; and that from Eastern Asia the transit to America was not altogether impossible is now admitted, we are told, by the most competent authorities. Again, we are reminded that the Mohammedan religion found its way in later times from Eastern Asia to Australia, on one side, and to

Madagascar and Africa on the other, so that there really was no physical impediment that could have prevented the spread of the earliest religion in the same directions. Even Northern Asia, we are told, was in later times touched by Persian influences, and might therefore have been reached by the emissaries of those who had made the first discovery of religion. At all events, no difficulties in the historical spreading of this religion, when once discovered, could compare, according to Professor Gruppe, with the difficulty of accounting for the repeated discovery of something so opposed to all the laws of thought as religion. *One* man, he thinks, in the whole history of the world, may have committed that logical suicide (p. 277), possibly two, if America could not have been reached from China, but certainly no more.

This is Professor Gruppe's theory, which sounds almost incredible in the nineteenth century after Christ, but which is put forward and defended with so much earnestness and so much learning that it requires and deserves a careful answer. When philosophers had proved, or imagined they had proved, that religion in some form or other was inevitable, and inseparable from human nature, to be told that religion would never have arisen but for the chance discovery of one single individual—and he a fool—is startling. When archaeologists had proved, or imagined they had proved, that the images of Egyptian deities went back to 4000 B.C. and that some of the statues of Babylon could not be much more modern [1], to be told that in Babylon everything before the seventh century is nothing but constructive

[1] Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 33.

chronology, and that in Egypt all dates before 1000 B.C. are uncertain, was enough to rouse considerable indignation. Still one cannot help respecting the opinions of a man, who, besides being a classical scholar, has made himself master of Hebrew, and has not shrunk from studying Sanskrit, Zend, Hieroglyphics and Cuneiform Inscriptions, before he ventured on his dangerous voyage of discovery. In spite of all drawbacks, I can strongly recommend his book as containing most useful information. I myself feel most grateful for it, for I am convinced that if my own system can resist so powerful and well delivered an attack as Professor Gruppe's, it need fear no serious danger in future.

There is another advantage to be derived from the study of Professor Gruppe's work. If other writers tell us the best that can be said of religion, he tells us the worst. Most writers who are honest enough to point out the weak points of religion, and who do not shut their eyes to the infinite mischief that has been wrought in its name, always plead for its purification and reformation, not for its total abolition. They see the rubbish, but they also see the grains of gold even in the most degraded forms of religion. Not so Professor Gruppe. Looking on all religion as an outrage on human reason, he hopes that the time may come when religion will have clean vanished from the earth, and when the world will have become so perfect that no more perfect world could be imagined or desired. It is well that we should see ourselves as we are seen by others, and no one certainly has enabled us to do that better than Professor Gruppe.

We have now finished our historical survey of the most important definitions of religion, though I am well aware that there are others which would have deserved and would have repaid a careful examination[1]. This survey has taken up much of our time, but the advantages which accrue from a careful definition of religion, and of all the words which we use in philosophical discussions, will be perceived again and again at every step of our inquiries.

Universality of Religion.

Let us to-day take one instance only. No question has excited so much interest and has produced so much heat and passion as that of the universality of religion. Are there at present any human beings without religion, or does history tell us of any? You may read book after book on the subject, and you will ask how it is possible that on so simple a matter of fact there can be any difference of opinion. But not only is there difference of opinion, but there is flat contradiction. The same tribes who are described by some observers as deeply religious, are described by others as without an idea of anything supernatural. How is this to be accounted for?

Angle of Vision.

Some allowance must, no doubt, be made for the angle of vision which varies in every observer. This does not necessarily arise from dishonesty, as is so

[1] Strauss defines religion as a feeling for or touch with the Universe (Gefühl für das Universum); H. Lang as love of the Infinite; Daniel Thompson in his work on *The Religious Sentiments of the Human Mind*, 1888, as the aggregate of those sentiments in the human mind arising in connection with the relations assumed to subsist between the order of nature (inclusive of the observer) and a postulated supernatural.

often supposed, but simply from a weakness inherent in human nature. We all are inclined to see what we expect or wish to see, and if we see what we expect or wish to see, we are naturally less incredulous and less critical than if we see what we did not expect or did not wish for. We are all liable to this, and we have all to learn to be doubly incredulous when we meet with unexpected confirmations of our own favourite theories. I shall give you two illustrations only of what I mean, cases where men, famous for their honesty and their critical disposition, were completely deceived in what they saw and heard.

Darwin on Tierra del Fuego.

One is the case of Darwin. We know how from his early youth his mind was dominated by the idea of evolution, and how his researches led him to look everywhere for evidence in support of that theory and for an explanation of its working. He wished to find men as low as animals, or, if possible, even on a slightly lower stage than that reached by some of the higher animals. When he visited the coasts of South America he thought he had found in the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego what he was looking for, and he accordingly described these people as like the devils which come on the stage in such plays as the *Freischütz*. 'Viewing such men,' he writes, 'one can hardly believe that they are fellow-creatures, and inhabitants of the same world. Their language scarcely deserves to be called articulate. Captain Cook compared it to a man clearing his throat; but certainly no European ever cleared his throat with

so many hoarse, guttural, and clicking sounds.' With regard to the physical features of these Fuegians also Darwin must either have been very unlucky in the specimens he met, or he must even then have used his own somewhat coloured Darwinian spectacles. Captain Snow speaks of exactly the same race, which Darwin describes as hideous devils, as really beautiful representatives of the human race, and Professor Virchow, who exhibited a number of natives from Tierra del Fuego at Berlin, protested warmly against the supposition that they were by nature an inferior race. But more than that. Their very language, which had been described by Captain Cook and by Darwin as worse than the noise of a man clearing his throat, has lately been studied by Giacomo Bovè, who describes it as 'sweet, pleasing, and full of vowels,' and who states that the number of words forming their dictionary amounts to 32,430. If we remember that Shakespeare could say all he wished to say—and who has poured out a greater wealth of thought and feeling than Shakespeare?—with about 15,000 words, a race possessed of more than double that number of words can hardly be said to be below the level reached by some of the higher animals. I have quoted this case on several occasions, not in order to question Darwin's honesty, but simply to illustrate one cause of error to which all human observations are liable—a disposition to see what we expect and wish to see. Darwin was honest enough to confess his error, and that is more than can be said of many other observers. And I feel therefore all the more bound to state that there are some dialects spoken in Tierra del Fuego, such as the Alacalu or

Ona, which Signor Bovè himself declares to be harsh and guttural [1].

Niebuhr and Bunsen.

Lest I should appear unfair in quoting Darwin only, let me tell you what happened to Niebuhr. The story was told me by my friend Bunsen, who was his secretary when Niebuhr was Prussian Minister at Rome. Niebuhr was very anxious to discover traces of Greek in Italian, as spoken by the common people in the South of Italy. He thought that the occupation of the country by the Greeks, when the South of Italy was called *Magna Graecia*, ought to have left at least a few vestiges behind, just as the occupation of Britain by the Romans can be proved by such words as *chester* in *Dorchester*, Lat. *castrum*; *coln* in *Lincoln*, Lat. *colonia*; *cheese*, Lat. *caseus*; *street*, Lat. *strata*, scil. *via* [2]. Finding himself one day with Bunsen in a small boat, and being caught by a storm, Niebuhr listened attentively to the sailors, who were rowing with all their might and shouting what sounded to Niebuhr's ears like πλόη. 'Listen,' he said to Bunsen, 'they call for πλόη or εὔπλοη (εὔπλοια), a fair voyage. There you have a survival of the Greek spoken in Magna Graecia.' Bunsen listened attentively. He saw that one of the sailors looked very English, and that the others simply repeated what he said and what seemed to them to possess a certain charm; and he soon discovered that what to Niebuhr sounded like πλόη or εὔπλοη, was really the English, 'Pull away.'

[1] See Bovè, *Patagonia, Terra del Fuoco*, Rapporto del Tenente Giacomo Bovè. Parte prima. Genova, 1883.

[2] G. P. Marsh, *Origin and History of the English Language*, p. 60.

If such things can happen to Niebuhr and Darwin, we must not be surprised if they happen to smaller men; and, to return to our subject, we must not be surprised if some missionaries find no trace of religion where anthropologists see the place swarming with ghosts and totems and fetishes; while other missionaries discover deep religious feelings in savages whom anthropologists declare perfectly incapable of anything beyond the most primitive sensuous perceptions.

Lubbock v. Quatrefages.

But though a certain bias must be admitted in writers on anthropology, that does not suffice to account for such books as Sir John Lubbock's *Prehistoric Times, as illustrated by Ancient Remains and the Manners and Customs of Modern Savages*, 1865, as compared with Quatrefages, *L'espèce humaine*, 1877, and Roskoff, *Religionswesen der rohesten Naturvölker*, 1880. Sir John Lubbock collects all the evidence that can possibly prove the existence even now of tribes without religion, while Quatrefages and Roskoff, sifting the same materials, show on the contrary that there is no trustworthy evidence whatsoever to support such a theory[1]. Neither the facts adduced by Roskoff, nor the arguments founded on these facts, have ever been controverted, and until that has been done—and I doubt whether it can be—this controversy ought to be considered at an end.

My friend, Dr. Tylor, also made some time ago a very useful collection to show how the same people who by one missionary are said to worship either one or many

[1] *Introd. to the Science of Religion*, p. 277.

gods, are declared by another to have no idea and no name of a Divine Being, and how even the same person sometimes makes two equally confident assertions which flatly contradict each other. Thus in one place Sparrmann[1] is very doubtful whether the Hottentots believe in a Supreme Being, and tells us that the Khoi-Khoi themselves declared that they were too stupid to understand anything, and never heard of a Supreme Being; while in another place the same Sparrmann argues that the Khoi-Khoi *must* believe in a supreme, very powerful, but fiendish Being, from whom they expect rain, thunder, lightning and cold. Liechtenstein, again, while denying in one place that there is any trace of religious worship among the Khosa Kafirs, admits in another that they believe in a Supreme Being who created the world, though, if we are to believe Van der Kamp (died 1811), they have no name for such a being.

Preconceived Ideas.

It may seem strange why there should be so much *animus* in these discussions, and why missionaries and anthropologists should not be satisfied with simply stating the facts, such as they are. But there is a reason for it. It seems important to some people to prove that religion is a necessity of the human mind, or, as it was formerly expressed, is innate, or, as Cicero says, is engraved by nature on our minds[2]. To them, therefore, it seems of vital interest to prove that no race of men has ever been found without some kind

[1] Theophilus Hahn, *Tsuni-Goam, the Supreme Being of the Khoi-Khoi*, 1881, p. 45.

[2] Cic. *De Nat. D.* i. 17, 45, 'Natura insculpsit in mentibus ut Deos aeternos et beatos haberemus.'

of religion, as little as any human beings have ever been found without the cravings of hunger and thirst. Other philosophers, on the contrary, like Professor Gruppe, are anxious to prove that religion is not an essential ingredient of human nature, but an acquired social habit; and in their eyes the actual existence of non-religious races acquires an immense importance, as confirming their view of human nature. In this they totally forget that all human beings, whether we call them savages or not, may formerly have had a whole pantheon of supernatural beings and have forgotten or surrendered it, just as the Hindus, in becoming Buddhists, surrendered their belief in the ancient *Devas*. But this would be against another article of the anthropologist faith, namely that savages, who are really far more changeable than civilised races, are stereotyped once for all, and unchangeable.

Sometimes these two parties change sides in a very strange way. When the Missionary wants to prove that no human being can be without some spark of religion, he sees religion everywhere, even in what is called totemism and fetishism; while, if he wants to show how necessary it is to teach and convert these irreligious races, he cannot paint their abject state in too strong colours, and he is apt to treat even their belief in an invisible and nameless god, as mere hallucination. Nor is the anthropologist free from such temptations. If he wants to prove that, like the child, every race of men was at one time atheistic, then neither totems, nor fetishes, not even prayers or sacrifices are any proof in his eyes of an ineradicable religious instinct. If, on the contrary, he is anxious to show that the religions of the highest races are but

an evolution of lower types of faith, or, as Darwin would wish us to believe, that even animals possess something like religious feelings, then a sigh, a tear, a sudden silence, an involuntary interjection, or even a curse, become proof positive of the existence of germs of religion, though in a most rudimentary state.

We ought to be as cautious at least as Cicero, who, after he has introduced Velleius as upholding the universality of religion[1], makes Cotta say that such important questions cannot be settled by majorities, provided even that we knew the religions of all races of men[2]. Though we know a good deal more of the world than was known at the time of Plutarch, yet we should probably hesitate to say what he says, 'that you may indeed find towns without walls, without letters, without kings, without houses, without wealth, not requiring coined money, ignorant of theatres and gymnasia. But there is no one who has seen or who ever will see a town without temples and without gods, not employing prayers, oaths, or oracles, and not performing sacrifices to render thanks for good things or to avert misfortunes[3].'

The historian of religion must try to be as free as possible from all preconceived opinions. He may be convinced, as a philosopher, that it is impossible for any human being to be without something like what we mean by religion, but as every child is born both without religion and without language, the possibility at least ought to be admitted that some

[1] Cic. *De Nat. Deor.* i. 16, 43, 'Quae est enim gens, aut quod genus hominum quod non habeat sine doctrina anticipationem quandam deorum?'

[2] Cic., *l. c.*, iii. 4, 11, 'Placet igitur tantas res opinione stultorum judicari?'

[3] Plutarch, *Adv. Colotem*, cap. 31.

races might have remained in a state of childish idiotcy, might be without religion, without language, nay, without reason.

In most cases, however, which I have been able to examine where some authorities maintained that certain savage tribes had never heard of religion, while other observers declared that they had discovered in their language names for good and evil spirits, these strange contradictions could always be accounted for by the absence of a proper definition of religion. If religion can be used, and has been used, in so many different and even contradictory senses as we saw in our last lecture, we need not wonder that there should be so much conflict of opinion when it has to be determined whether Negroes or Australians do or do not possess religion.

If religion is defined as a *modus cognoscendi et colendi Deum*, even Buddhism would not be a religion. If it is defined as a surrender of the finite will to the infinite, even Judaism, at least in its earliest form, would hardly deserve the name of religion. If a belief in a more perfect future life is considered an essential element of religion, then the faith of the early Greeks would not be a religion[1]. If temples and sacrifices are indispensable for religion, the ancient Germans, and some of the Polynesian tribes[2], even at present, would be without a religion.

This is but one instance to show how much all our inquiries into the history of religion, and all our

[1] Mill, *Three Essays*, p. 121.

[2] Chamisso, *Werke*, ii. p. 258, 'Es giebt auf Ulea und den östlicheren Inseln (Lamureck, etc.) weder Tempel noch Priester, und es finden keine feierlichen Opfer statt. Auf Mogemug, Eap und Ngoli sind eigene Tempel erbaut, Opfer werden dargebracht, und es giebt einen religiösen Dienst.'

theories on the origin of religion, depend on a clear and correct definition of what we mean by religion, of what is included in and what is excluded from the sphere of that name.

Names for Religion.

Before, however, I proceed to give you what seems to me the right definition of religion, at all events from an historical point of view,—a definition, I mean, of what religion has been, rather than of what, according to the opinions of various philosophers, it ought to be, I have still a few words to say on the names for religion in foreign, and particularly in Oriental languages. It is surprising to find how difficult it is to discover words in these languages which correspond exactly to our concept of religion. This difficulty applies, no doubt, to many words, and it is a very useful lesson which the study of foreign languages teaches us.

When we first begin to learn a new language, all seems easy. The dictionary gives us the corresponding words, the grammar the corresponding forms. But the more we learn of a foreign language, the more difficult do we find it to discover words that will really square our own words. There is always something too much or too little. We enter really into a new atmosphere as soon as we speak in a new language, and there are associations playing round every one of our own expressions which, like the light and shade of the clouds, like the rustling of the leaves, and like the freshness of the air, determine, without being perceived, the whole character of a landscape.

So common a word as philosopher, for instance, has a much narrower meaning in German than in English.

A man like Darwin would not be called *ein Philosoph* in German, but *ein Naturforscher*. *Philosophie* in German has remained restricted to Logic, Psychology, Ethics, Metaphysics, Aesthetics; and we have Darwin's own confession that of all these subjects he was absolutely ignorant. It is a standing joke among German philosophers against English philosophy, that in England you can buy *philosophical instruments*. The joke loses its point as soon as it is known that philosophy in English means likewise the study of nature, such as chemistry, optics, acoustics and all the rest, and that therefore what in German are called *physicalische Instrumente* may well be called *philosophical instruments* in English.

There are many such words in all languages which are the despair of the translator. A very common word in German is *zweckmässig*, that is, anything so contrived that it answers its purpose. From it, *Zweckmässigkeit*, which we may translate by *appropriateness*, but which means a great deal more. We can speak of the *innere Zweckmässigkeit eines Organismus*, that is, an organism in which everything is so contrived that it answers exactly the purpose for which it was intended; but I know no word in English or French which fully conveys that meaning [1].

However, the modern languages of Europe have so many of their antecedents in common, that in a rough and ready way one can be made to answer as well as another to express our thoughts. We lose a little

[1] Dr. Martineau (*Study of Religion*, ii. p. 154) translates it by 'adaptation to internal ends,' or 'internal conformity to an end,' but he generally retains the German expression

when we exchange a shilling for a German *Mark*, and we lose more when we accept a *franc* for a shilling; still, if we are not too exacting, we can make our way through the world with one coinage as well as with the other.

But when we leave Europe to travel in Eastern countries, the exchange becomes more and more difficult, both with our monetary and with our intellectual coinage. It sounds hardly credible, but if you take so rich a language as Sanskrit, and a literature so full of religion as that of India, you look in vain for a word for *religion*. To a certain extent this is our own fault. If we put so many ill-defined meanings into a word as have been put into religion, we must not be surprised if we do not find exactly the same conglomerate elsewhere. Here it is where thinking in two languages often proves very useful, by making us aware of the presence of the many amorphous particles of thought which will not pass through the sieve of another language. But it is strange, nevertheless, that a word which seems to us so simple and so clear as religion, should be without its exact counterpart in any language.

Words for Religion in Chinese.

It may easily be imagined that if so rich a language as Sanskrit is deficient in names corresponding exactly to our idea of religion, other languages do not supply us with better equivalents for that word.

In Chinese, for instance, there is, as Professor Legge informs us, no word corresponding exactly to our word religion.

To Confucianism there is applied more especially

the character *Chiâo*, meaning 'the Teaching or Instruction,' *Doctrina*.

To Buddhism the character *Fâ* is commonly given, meaning 'Law.' *Fo Fâ*, 'the Law of Buddha,' is Buddhism.

Tâoism is *Tâo*, 'the Way.'

These are often spoken of as *San Chiâo*, 'The Three Systems of Teaching,' for which phrase the best rendering seems to be 'the Three Religions.' But if the three be spoken of discriminatingly, the different terms are appropriate to them severally.

The authors of the famous Nestorian Inscription applied all the three names to Christianity. Now it is with them 'the Doctrine,' now 'the Law,' and now 'the Way.' They found it difficult, they say, to fix on a distinctive name for it, and finally determined to call it *Ching Chiâo*, 'the Illustrious Doctrine,' using the terms which Lâo-tze employs, when he says he would call his subject or system the *Tâo* or Way.

The general term for 'having faith' is *hsin*, indicating the idea of 'believing.'

Words for Religion in Arabic.

In Arabic, which reflects more advanced and subtle thought on religious topics than most languages, there is, nevertheless, no word that can be considered a real equivalent of our word religion. *Dîn*, according to Lane, implies obedience and submission to the law, and is used in Arabic for religion in the widest sense, both historical and practical. *Ahlu-d-dîn*, however, people of religion, is a term restricted to those who profess to found their faith upon revealed scriptures, Mohammedans, Jews, and Christians,

while the followers of natural religion are classed with the followers of philosophical systems, as *ahlu-bahwâ*, people of opinions.

Dharma.

I know the difficulty of finding a word for religion in Sanskrit from practical experience.

Some years ago an enlightened and very zealous gentleman in India, Behramji M. Malabari, conceived the plan of having my Hibbert Lectures 'On the Origin and Growth of Religion' translated not only into Sanskrit, but into the principal vernaculars of the country. The question was, how to translate the title. If the book had been on the origin of any particular religion, such as the teaching of Buddha or Mohammed or Christ, there would have been no difficulty. But the idea of religion in general had not presented itself clearly to the Hindu mind, and hence there was no recognised name for it. After long consideration, we settled that it should be simply Dharma-vyâkhyâna, 'an explanation of Dharma,' that is, the Law, and under that title translations of my Hibbert Lectures have appeared in Bengâlî, Guzarâtî, and Marâthî, and more will appear in Sanskrit, Hindî, and Tamil.

This dharma certainly means religion in one sense, but in one sense only. It means *law*, and a law-book therefore is called Dharma-sâstra. The same word dharma may be used to express dogma or objective religion, but it cannot include the subjective disposition which we likewise comprehend under the name of religion.

In the Rig-veda dharma, law, does not yet occur,

but only the other form dharman. With the accent on the first syllable dhárman means one who holds and upholds; with the accent on the last, dharmá[1] means support, *ful-crum*; then law and order, what holds things as they are and as they ought to be. The gods are looked upon as the givers and guardians of these dharmas or laws. In later Sanskrit dhárma has the same meaning of law, then of duty and virtue, that is, of law performed. Lastly, it has been used in the sense of the nature or essence of a thing, as we might say the law or character of a thing, the εἶδος. When Manu (II. 12) in his Law-book explains dharma, he represents it as consisting of the Veda (revelation), of Smṛiti (tradition), of Sadâkâra (the behaviour of good people), and of what is dear to oneself, that is, what meets with the approval of our own conscience.

It was with the Buddhists that dharma became more exclusively the name of the doctrines taught by Buddha, which contained all that was supposed necessary for salvation. The three great treasures of the Buddhists are *Buddha*, the *Church* (saṅgha), and the *Law* (dharma); and when a man embraced Buddhism, he recited the formula, 'I take refuge with Buddha, with the Church, and with the Law, as preached by Buddha.'

But through all these phases dharma always retains something of its etymological meanings. It is what holds us in the right path, and keeps us from what is wrong. It is the law that comes to us from without, not the law or the will, or whatever else we may call it, that comes from within.

[1] Rv. V. 15, 2.

Veda.

A Brahman, when speaking of his own religion, might use the word Veda. Veda means originally knowledge, but it has been restricted so as to signify exclusively what a Brahman considers as sacred and revealed knowledge. Instead of Veda we find in Sanskrit another curious word for revelation, namely, *Sruti*, which means hearing, from *sru*, to hear, the Greek κλύω. It is most carefully defined by Hindu theologians, so as to exclude all secular knowledge, and so as to comprehend such knowledge only as is received by direct inspiration from a divine source. Even the Laws of Manu, though invested with a sacred character, are not *Sruti*, but only Sm*ri*ti, which means remembering or tradition, not revelation; so that whenever there should be a conflict between Sm*ri*ti and *Sruti*, Sm*ri*ti is at once overruled by *Sruti*. All these expressions, however, refer clearly to objective religion only, to a body of doctrines placed before us for acceptance or rejection. They do not render what we mean by subjective or inward religion, an idea that seemed quite strange, and proved therefore untranslatable, to my Hindu translators.

Bhakti.

There is, however, in later Sanskrit one expression which comes very near to what we mean by subjective religion, namely bhakti, devotion and faith.

The verb bha*g*, bha*g*ati, from which bhakti is derived, means first of all to divide, to distribute, to give. We read in the Rig-veda of the gods distributing gifts to men, and also of rich people giving presents to their friends and followers. The same

verb, however, particularly if used in the Âtmanepada or the middle, takes also the meaning of giving something to oneself, that is, choosing it for oneself, holding it, loving it. From meaning to choose, to love, bha*g* took the more special meaning of loving, venerating, and worshipping a deity. Bhakta, the participle, thus came to mean a devoted worshipper, and bhakti faith, devotion, and love.

Bhakti, in the sense of loving devotion directed towards a certain deity, does not occur in the Vedic literature, except in some of the Upanishads. It gains more and more ground, however, in the Bhagavadgîtâ, where it means the loving worship paid to K*rish*n*a*, and it then comes so near to the Christian conception of faith and love that several Sanskrit scholars as well as missionaries have expressed their conviction that the idea of bhakti must have been borrowed by the Brahmans from Christianity[1]. It is strange that these scholars should not see that what is natural in one country is natural in another also. If fear, reverence, and worship of the Supreme God could become devotion and love with Semitic people, why not in India also? Besides, we can see in India the same development of thought as in Palestine. No doubt the gods are feared and reverenced in India, but they are also addressed as friends, and sentiments such as 'thou art like a father to a son,' are by no means unfrequent in the earliest portions of the Rigveda. We read in the very first hymn of the Rigveda, 'Be easy of access to us, as a father to his son.' In the Upanishads, when the different gods of the

[1] See *Die Bhagavadgîtâ*, übersetzt und erläutert von Dr. F. Lorinser, 1869.

Veda have been superseded by the Supreme Lord, the Îsvara, the feelings of love and devotion are transferred to him. And at a still later time, when Krishna was worshipped as the manifestation of the Supreme Spirit, we see in the Bhagavadgîtâ every expression that human love is capable of, lavished on him.

I shall read you first an extract from the Svetâsvatara Upanishad[1]:

'1. Some wise men, being deluded, speak of Nature, and others of Time (as the cause of everything); but it is the greatness of God by which this Brahma-wheel (the world) is made to turn.

7. Let us know that highest great Lord of lords, the highest deity of deities, the master of masters, the highest above, as God, the Lord of the world, the adorable.

10. That only God who spontaneously covered himself, like a spider, with threads drawn from nature (pradhâna, the chief cause), may he grant us entrance into Brahman.

11. He is the one God, hidden in all things, pervading all,—the Self within all beings, watching over all works, dwelling in all beings, the witness, the perceiver, the only one, free from all qualities.

12. He is the one ruler of many who are above their acts[2]; he who makes the one seed manifold. The wise who perceive him within their self, to them belongs eternal happiness, not to others.

20. When man shall roll up the sky like a hide, then only will there be an end of misery, unless that God has first been known.

[1] Upanishads, translated by M. M., in *Sacred Books of the East*, xv. 260.
[2] Nishkriya, without acts, i. e. not really active, but passive: merely looking on while the organs perform their acts.

23. If these truths have been told to a high-minded man, who feels the highest *devotion* (bhakti) for God [1], and as for God so for his Guru, then they will shine forth, then they will shine forth indeed.'

Here then we have in the Upanishads the idea of bhakti or devotion clearly pronounced, and as no one has as yet ventured to put the date of the Svetâsvatara [2] Upanishad later than the beginning of our era, it is clearly impossible to admit here the idea of early Christian influences.

The date of the Bhagavadgîtâ, in which Krishna is represented as the Supreme Spirit, and loving devotion for him is demanded as the only means of salvation, is more doubtful [3]. Still, even if, chronologically, Christian influences were possible at the time when that poem was finished, there is no necessity for admitting them. I do not wonder at readers, unaccustomed to Oriental literature, being startled when they read in the Bhagavadgîtâ IX. 29: 'They who worship me (bhaganti) with devotion or love (bhaktyâ), they are in me and I in them (mayi te, teshu kâpy aham) [4].'

But such coincidences between the thoughts of the New Testament and the thoughts of Eastern sages, will meet us again and again, because human

[1] Sândilya (Sûtra 18) explains deva as a god, not as Îsvara, the Lord.

[2] Professor Weber in one of his earliest treatises (*Indische Studien*, i. 421 seq.) has indeed discovered in the name Svetâsvatara, i. e. white mule, something that may remind us of a Syro-Christian Mission, but I doubt whether he would still like to be held responsible for such an opinion. With the same right Krishna might remind us of an Ethiopian missionary.

[3] See the Bhagavadgîtâ, translated by K. T. Telang, *Sacred Books of the East*, viii. 34, 1882.

[4] St. John vi. 57; xvii. 23.

nature is after all the same in all countries and at all times.

A whole system of religious philosophy has been built up in later times, founded on the principle of bhakti or love, namely the Sûtras of *Śâṇḍ*ilya [1], who in his second Sûtra explains bhakti as affection fixed on God.

And at the present moment no system is more popular in Bengal than that of *K*aitanya. *K*aitanya was born in 1486, and he did much to popularize and humanize the old Brahmanic doctrines [2]. With him bhakti or love became the foundation of everything, and different steps are laid down through which a worshipper may reach the highest perfection. The exoteric steps consist in discipline, (1) social discipline (svadharmâ*k*ara*ṇa*); (2) discipline of the intellect and a surrender of all to K*ri*sh*ṇa* (K*ri*sh*ṇa*-karmârpa*ṇa*); (3) mendicity (svadharmatyâga); (4) philosophic culture (*gñ*ânamiśrâ bhakti); (5) simplicity of the heart (*gñ*ânaśûnyabhakti); and (6) dispassion (śântabhâva).

Then follow the higher or esoteric steps, viz. loving devotion (premabhakti), consisting in humility (dâsya), friendship (sâkhya), and tenderness (vâtsalya); and, as the crowning step, sweetness and love (madhurabhâva, kântabhâva), represented by the highest and purest love between husband and wife.

Bhakti, therefore, may be used as an equivalent of religion in the sense of devotion and love, but it is, comparatively speaking, a modern word in Sanskrit.

[1] Edited by Ballantyne in the *Bibliotheca Indica*, 1861, and translated by Prof. Cowell in the same collection, No. 409.

[2] See Yogendra Chandra Ghosh, *Chaitanya's Ethics*, Calcutta, 1884; A. de Gubernatis, *Giornale della Società Asiat. Italiana*, 1888, p. 116; and *K*aitanya-*k*androdaya, ed. Rajendralal Mitra, *Bibl. Indica*.

Śraddhâ, faith.

There is, however, a very ancient word for *faith*. It is a very important word, for while bhakti is a purely Indian concept, and even in India of later growth, śraddhâ, faith, is a very old word, and must have existed before the Aryan nations separated[1]. Think what that implies. We read in the Rig-veda I. 55, 5: 'When the fiery Indra hurls down the thunderbolt, then people believe in him.'

Adha kana śrat dadhati tvishimate
Indrâya vagram nighanighnate vadham.

Here you have in one line the whole secret of natural religion. When people see the manifestation of power in the storm and lightning, then they believe in Indra. It is not said that they perceive Indra, or that they find out by reasoning that there must be a god, called Indra: no, they believe in him, they accept him, they do not doubt his existence. Or again, Rv. I. 102, 2: 'Sun and moon move in regular succession, that we may have faith, O Indra.'

Asme sûryakandramase abhikakshe
Śraddhe kam indra karatah vitarturam.

Here we have no longer faith in Indra or any particular deity, but faith in general, and that faith is taken as the result of our seeing the regular rising and setting of sun and moon.

Faith, therefore, is represented as reposing on terror produced by the overpowering convulsions of nature, and on trust, called forth by the discovery of law and order in nature. Few of the greatest living

[1] *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 309. According to Śândilya (Sûtra 24), bhakti is not identical with śraddhâ, because śraddhâ, belief, is merely subsidiary to ceremonial works; but not so is faith in Îśvara.

philosophers have anything better to say on the origin of faith.

And now let us consider this word *sraddhâ* a little more closely. It is letter by letter the same as the Latin *crêdo*, and our *creed*. When the Brahmans said *srad-dadhe*, the Romans said *credidi*; when the Brahmans said *sraddhitam*, the Romans said *creditum*.

The two words are therefore clearly the same; but if you ask me what *sraddhâ* meant etymologically, I can only say, We do not know. Professor Darmesteter derives it from *srad*, in the sense of heart, and *dhâ*, to place. Phonetically this etymology might be defended, though *srad*, by the side of *hrid*, the regular word for heart in Sanskrit, would be without analogy. But Professor Darmesteter has not considered that *srad* occurs elsewhere by itself, and that there it cannot possibly mean heart. For instance, Rv. VIII. 75, 2, *srat visvâ vâryâ kridhi*, 'Make all our wishes true!' Here *srad* cannot possibly be taken as a dialectic form of *hrid*.

How *srat* should come to mean true, and *sraddhâ*, to make true, to accept as true, we do not know. But this only shows how old a word *sraddhâ* really is, and how early in the history of the human mind the idea must have sprung up that we may accept as true what can neither be confirmed by our senses nor proved by our reasoning, but what is nevertheless irresistible. Here you see how we may discover embedded in the very deepest strata of language the germs of religion —for there can be no name for believing before the first rays of faith or *sraddhâ* have dawned in the human heart.

LECTURE V.

MY OWN DEFINITION OF RELIGION.

Former Definitions.

WE have now examined the most important and most characteristic definitions of religion. We have seen how some of them looked chiefly to the practical character, others to the theoretic character of religion, while some philosophers, such as Schleiermacher, would recognise the true essence of religion neither in its practical nor in its theoretic manifestations, but only in a complete change of our nature, in a loving devotion to and almost union with the Supreme Being.

Do not suppose that I look upon all these definitions as wrong, or that I intend to criticise them one by one. On the contrary, I believe that most of them contain some truth, some very important truth, but they all seem to me to be vulnerable in one and the same point, namely in taking the object of religious thought for granted and therefore leaving it undefined. This may be defensible, if in defining religion we only think of our own, or of the religion of the present age. But if the historical school has proved anything, it has established the fact, to which I alluded at the end of my last lecture, that in religion as in language there is continuity, there is an unbroken chain which

connects our thoughts and our words with the first thoughts conceived and with the first words uttered by the earliest ancestors of our race. A definition of religion ought therefore to be applicable, not only to what religion is now, but to what religion was in its origin, and in its earliest developments. Religion may change, and it has changed, as we know; but however much it may change, it can never break entirely with its past, it can never be severed from its deepest roots, and it is in these deepest roots that we ought to seek, as it seems to me, the true essence of religion.

But it is not only religion in its origin which the ordinary definitions would fail to comprehend. There are several of the historical developments of religion also which could hardly be brought within their gage.

Is Buddhism a religion?

If you tried, for instance, to bring Buddhism within the compass of any of the definitions hitherto examined, you would find it impossible to do so, and yet, as you know, the largest number of human beings have trusted to Buddha's teaching as their only means of salvation. Those who define religion as a theory, as a mode of knowledge, must necessarily, as I pointed out before, supply an object that is to be known, whether they call it gods or god, the father, the creator, the Supreme Being, or the Supreme Will.

Buddhism, as theoretical, not included under any definition.

But in Buddhism—I mean in Southern Buddhism, which ought to be carefully distinguished from Northern Buddhism or Bodhism—there is no mention of God as a creator or ruler of the world[1]; on the

[1] See the account of Brahman as a Creator in *Selected Essays*, ii. 297.

contrary, a belief in creation is condemned, if not as heresy, at all events as a conceit highly reprimanded by Buddha himself. Gods or Devas are mentioned indeed, but only as subordinate, legendary beings, accepted as part of the traditional phraseology of the times. From a kind of compassion they seem to have been accommodated with a new position as servants and worshippers of the Buddha. Several of the great questions of religion, besides that of the existence of a Deity or Creator, are banished once for all from the discussions, nay from the thoughts of orthodox Buddhists. Some of Buddha's own disciples are introduced as blaming the master for not enlightening them on such questions as whether the world is eternal or had a beginning, whether Buddha and those who, like him, have arrived at perfect knowledge, will live after death or not? Whether the living soul is identical with the body or not?

Mâluṅkya-putta and Buddha.

After Mâluṅkya-putta had expostulated with Buddha for leaving his disciples in uncertainty on such important points, Buddha answers[1]:

How did I speak to thee formerly, Mâluṅkya-putta? Did I say: Come, and be my disciple, and I will teach thee whether the world is eternal or not, whether the world is finite or infinite, whether the living principle is identical with the body or different from it, whether the perfect man lives after death or does not, whether he lives and does not live at the

[1] Mr. Rhys Davids, in his translation of the Milinda-paṇha (i. 199), calls him the son of the Mâluṅkya woman (Mâluṅkyâ-putta), but he mentions Mâluṅka as a various reading. Professor Oldenberg (*Buddha*, p. 281) gives the name as Mâlukya-putta, or simply Mâlukya.

same time, or whether he neither lives nor does not live.

Mâluṅkya-putta replied: Master, you did not say so.

Then Buddha continued: Then, did you say to me, I will become thy disciple, but answer me all these questions?

Mâluṅkya-putta confesses that he did not.

After that Buddha proceeds: A man was once wounded by a poisoned arrow. His friends and relations called in an experienced physician. What, if the wounded person had said, I shall not allow my wound to be treated till I know who the man is by whom I was wounded, whether he is a nobleman, or a Brâhmaṇa, or a Vaiśya, or a Śûdra. Or what, if he said, I shall not allow my wound to be treated till I know how the man is called by whom I was wounded, to what family he belongs, whether he is tall or short or of middle stature, and what the weapon was like by which I was wounded. What would be the end of it? The man surely would die of his wound.

Buddha then lets Mâluṅkya-putta see that when he came to him he was like the wounded man who wished to be healed, and he finishes his lesson by saying: Let what has not been revealed by me remain unrevealed, and let what has been revealed by me remain revealed.

It was natural that the opponents of the Buddhists should make this reticence of Buddha on points of the highest importance a ground of attack. We find the question fully discussed, for instance, in the Milinda-paṇha[1], a theological and philosophical dialogue

[1] Translated by Mr. Rhys Davids in the *Sacred Books of the East.*

in which the Yavana King, Milinda (Menandros, about 100 B.C.), exchanges his views on Buddhism with Nâgasena. Here the King says:

'Venerable Nâgasena, it was said by the Blessed One: "In respect of the truths, Ânanda, the Tathâgata has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher who keeps something back." But on the other hand, he made no reply to the question put by the son of the Mâluńkya woman. This problem, Nâgasena, will be one of two ends, on one of which it must rest, for he must have refrained from answering either out of ignorance, or out of wish to conceal something. If the first statement be true, it must have been out of ignorance. But if he knew, and still did not reply, then the first statement must be false. This too is a doubled-pointed dilemma. It is now put to you, and you have to solve it.

'The Blessed One, O king, made that first statement to Ânanda, and he did not reply to Mâluńkya-putta's question. But that was neither out of ignorance, nor for the sake of concealing anything. There are four kinds of ways in which a problem may be explained. And which are the four? There is the problem to which an explanation can be given that shall be direct and final. There is the problem which can be answered by going into details. There is the problem which can be answered by asking another. And there is the problem which can be put on one side.

'And which is the problem which can be put on one side? It is such as this—"Is the universe everlasting?" "Is it not everlasting?" "Has it an end?" "Has it no end?" "Is it both endless and unending?" "Is it neither the one nor the other?"

"Are the soul and the body the same thing?" "Is the soul distinct from the body?" "Does a Tathâgata exist after death?" "Does he not exist after death?" "Does he both exist and not exist after death?" "Does he neither exist nor not exist after death?"

'Now it was on such a question, that ought to be put on one side, that the Blessed One gave no reply to Mâluńkya-putta. And why ought such a question to be put on one side? Because there is no reason or object for answering it. That is why it should be put aside. For the Blessed Buddhas lift not up their voice without a reason and without an object.'

'Very good, Nâgasena. Thus is it, and I accept it as you say.'

Buddha does not imply that he could not have answered these questions or revealed these mysteries, if he had chosen. He professes the same philosophical abstinence, or ἐποχή, or agnosticism, as it is now called, as Socrates, and he utters the strongest condemnation of those of his disciples who ventured to give either a positive or a negative answer.

Yamaka, on Life after Death.

Thus one of them, called Yamaka, taught openly that a monk, if free from sin, would cease to exist after death. But for this he was found guilty of heresy, and had to be converted to the true view, namely to abstain from expressing any opinion on a subject which is beyond our knowledge[1].

Dialogue between the King of Kosala and the nun Khemâ.

The question whether the Buddha himself, the

[1] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 287.

founder of what we call Buddhism, continued to exist after death was naturally a question of a more than purely speculative interest. It touched the hearts of his disciples, and there must have been the strongest inclination on their part to answer it in the affirmative. The Northern Buddhists admit the existence of Buddha and of all Buddhas after the end of their earthly career. But the Southern Buddhists abstain. Thus in a dialogue between Pasenadi, the King of Kosala, and the nun Khemâ, the King is introduced as asking the question again and again, whether Buddha exists after death, or, as we should say, whether the founder of that religion enjoyed eternal life. But the nun is immovable. She simply repeats the old answer: 'The perfect Buddha has not revealed it.' And when questioned further, why the perfect Buddha should have left so momentous a question unanswered, she says[1]:

O great King, have you an arithmetician or a master of the mint or an accountant who could count the grains of sand of the Ganges, and could say, there are there so many grains, so many hundreds, so many thousands, or so many hundreds of thousands of grains?

The King replied, I have not, O reverend lady.

Or have you, O great King, the nun continued, an arithmetician, a master of the mint, or an accountant who could measure the water in the great ocean, and could say, there are there so many pints of water, so many hundreds, so many thousands, or so many hundreds of thousands of pints?

The King replied, I have not, O reverend lady.

[1] Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 284.

And why not? she said. The great ocean is deep, immeasurable, unfathomable. And in the same manner, O King, if one tried to conceive the nature of the perfect Buddha by the predicates of corporeity, these predicates would be impossible in the perfect Buddha, their very root would be annihilated, they would be cut down, like a palm-tree, and removed, so that they could never rise again. The perfect Buddha, O King, is released from having his nature to be counted by the numbers of the corporeal world; he is deep, immeasurable, unfathomable, like the great ocean. To say that the perfect Buddha is beyond death, is wrong; to say that he is not beyond death is wrong likewise; to say that he is at the same time beyond and not beyond, is wrong; and to say that he is neither beyond nor not beyond[1], is wrong again.

With this answer the King must be satisfied, and millions of human beings who call themselves Buddhists have had to be satisfied. They have no God, no creator or ruler whom they could know, there is no *modus cognoscendi et colendi Deum* for them; and yet who would say that they have no religion?

Buddhism, as practical, not included under any definition.

And so again, if we tried to apply to Buddhism those definitions which see in religion not so much a theory as a practice, which, for instance, as Kant's definition, explain it as a recognition of all our duties as divine commands, how would Buddhism then be brought in?

The Doctrine of Karma.

The essence of Buddhist morality is a belief in

[1] N' eva hoti na na hoti tathâgato param maraṇâ 'ti pi na upeti.

Karma, that is, of work done in this or in a former life, which must go on producing effects till the last penny is paid. The same thought pervades much of the Brahmanic literature, and it is still one of the most familiar ideas among the Hindus of the present day.

We find the first traces of this belief in Karma in the Upanishads. Thus we read in the *Bṛihadâraṇyaka*[1] III. 2, 1:

'Yâ*gñ*avalkya,' said *G*âratkârava Ârtabhâga, 'when the speech of a dead person enters into the fire, breath into the air, the eye into the sun, the mind into the moon, the hearing into space, into the earth the body, into the ether the self, into the shrubs the hairs of the body, into the trees the hairs of the head, when the blood and the seed are deposited in the water, where is then that person?'

Yâ*gñ*avalkya said: 'Take my hand, my friend. We two alone shall know of this; let this question of ours not be (discussed) in public.'

Then the two went out and argued, and what they said was *Karma*, work, and what they praised was *Karma*, work, namely that a man becomes good by good work, and bad by bad work. And after that *G*âratkârava Ârtabhâga held his peace.

Among the Buddhists, however, the belief in Karma took a most prominent place. In the very first verse of the Dhammapada[2], we read:

'All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil

[1] *Sacred Books of the East*, XV. 126.
[2] *Sacred Books of the East*, X. 3.

thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage.'

And again, verse 127:

'Not in the sky, not in the midst of the sea, nor if we enter into the clefts of the mountains, is there known a spot in the whole world where a man might be freed from an evil deed.'

There can be no doubt that this faith has produced very beneficial results, and that it would explain many things which to us remain the riddles of life—but is it religion?

While to us the inequalities with which men are born into the world seem often unjust, they can be justified at once by adopting the doctrine of *Karma*. We are born as what we deserved to be born[1], we are paying our penalty or are receiving our reward in this life for former acts. This makes the sufferer more patient, for he feels that he is wiping out an old debt, while the happy man knows that he is living on the interest of his capital of good works, and that he must try to lay by more capital for a future life. It may be said that in the absence of all proof of such a theory, and with the total extinction of any recollection of our former good or evil deeds, very little practical effect could be expected from this assumption. But this is not the case, for the assumption has become a belief, as strong as any belief in a religious dogma. Besides, though it cannot be proved, it helps to explain many difficulties, and this gives it a strong hold on man's convictions. The Buddhist trusting in *Karma*

[1] 'My possessions are my Karma, my inheritance is my Karma, my mother's womb is my Karma,' etc.; see Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 248, quotation from the Aṅguttara Nikâya, Paṅkaka Nipâta.

can honestly say, *Whatever is, is right*, and the same belief which makes him see in what he now suffers and enjoys the natural outcome of his former works, will support him in trying to avoid evil and to do good for its own sake, knowing that whatever may befall in this life, no good and no evil word, thought, or deed, can ever be lost in the life of the universe.

Of course, like every honest belief, this belief in Karma too may degenerate into superstition. I read not long ago in a Ceylon paper, that when an English judge condemned a Buddhist to death, the culprit said quietly: 'Thank you, my lord, you also will die.' He then went on to threaten the judge. 'You will become a bullock in your next life,' he said, 'and I shall then be a driver, and I'll drive you up the Kadujanava Pass,'—one of the steepest of the steep paths of Ceylon.

While Christian teachers comfort the afflicted by telling them that all injustice in this life will be remedied in the next, that Lazarus will be in Abraham's bosom and the rich man in torments, Buddha teaches those who seem to suffer unjustly in this life that they have deserved their punishment by their former deeds, that they must be grateful to pay off their old debts, and that they should try to lay in a store of good works for the time to come.

While ordinary mortals must be satisfied with this general belief, Buddha himself and those who have reached a high stage of enlightenment, are supposed to possess the power of remembering their former states of existence; and many of the most touching legends in the Buddhist canon are the recollections of his

former existences by Buddha himself, the so-called *Gâtakas*.

All this is most excellent, and, I believe, has proved most extensively useful; but when we are asked whether it could be accommodated under any of the definitions of religion which we have passed in review, we have to answer that it cannot.

Let us then attempt our own definition.

My own definition of Religion.

A definition, as logicians tell us, ought to begin with the *summum genus*, to which what we have to define belongs, and should then proceed to narrow the sphere of the *summum genus* by those differences which distinguish our object from all other objects belonging to the same genus.

Religion an Experience.

I well remember Professor Weisse, the Hegelian Professor at Leipzig, beginning his lectures on the Philosophy of Religion, by telling us that religion was, first of all, an experience.

To many of his hearers this seemed at the time a mere truism, but one comes to learn that some truisms are not only true, but also very important.

Unless religion can be proved to be an experience, in the ordinary sense of that word, and as sharing the essential qualities of all other experience, it will always lack the solid foundation on which all our knowledge rests. Religion, if it is to hold its place as a legitimate element of our consciousness, must, like all other knowledge, begin with sensuous experience. If that foundation is wanting, there can be

neither natural nor supernatural religion, for the supernatural is not what is unnatural, but what is super-natural, superimposed on the natural. In that sense I hold as strongly as ever, and in spite of all the false interpretations that have been put on it, that *Nihil est in fide quod non ante fuerit in sensu.*

In order to explain my meaning more clearly, it will be necessary to show in greater detail, of what all our experience, all our states of consciousness, all our Ego-knowledge really consists, and how even our highest aspirations have their roots in the universal soil of sensuous experience.

Our experience consists of sensations, percepts, concepts, and names.

All that we have or know consists of *sensations*, *percepts*, *concepts*, and *names*. But though these four phases of knowledge may be distinguished, they cannot be separated as entirely independent functions of our mind. They form parts of one whole, members of one living organism. In the actual work of thought, as carried on by educated men, we deal with names as the embodiments of concepts, we deal with concepts as the result of percepts, and we deal with percepts as the residue of sensations. The process which changes sensations into percepts, and percepts into concepts and names belongs to the very earliest age in the history of the human mind. In learning our language we enter at once on an inheritance which has been amassed by our predecessors during thousands of years, and to which we ourselves may add something, but very little in comparison with what we receive ready-made. It has been argued that even with us sensations may exist by themselves,

as when we feel a blow, taste what is bitter, smell what is nauseous, see what is dark, hear what is loud. They exist, no doubt; but as soon as we become conscious of them, know them, think them, they are more than sensations; they have become percepts, concepts, and names. From the very expressions which we use for these sensations, it is clear that as soon as we not only suffer a dumb pain, but are becoming conscious of it, we have raised the momentary feeling into a permanent image, into something that causes what we call the percept of a blow,—of something that bites, and is therefore called *bitter*, or of something that is like sea-sickness, and is therefore called *nauseous*, or of something like the night, and is therefore called *dark*, or of something like a shout, and is therefore called *loud*. However, let it be granted that, like dumb animals, we may stare at the blue sky or the green forest, without knowing anything about blue or green or colour; even then that state of receptive passiveness should at all events not be called thought, but have its own distinctive name. Real thought (anta*h*kara*n*a, inward-doing) begins when we leave that merely passive stage of staring or dreaming, when we do what no one can do for us, namely, combine the percepts of sensations into concepts by discovering something they share in common, and embody that common property in a sign or a name.

Sensation and perception inexplicable.

This process of conceiving and naming, or naming and conceiving, though it leads on to the most marvellous results, is in itself extremely simple and per-

fectly intelligible, whereas the previous process, that of feeling and perceiving, is not only mysterious, but altogether beyond our powers of comprehension. Formerly people took the very opposite view. It was supposed that sensation and perception were so simple and natural as to require no philosophical explanation at all, while understanding and reason and all the rest were looked upon as powers so mysterious that, like language, they could only be explained as divine gifts.

All this is changed now. All that is done by ourselves, call it conception or naming or adding and subtracting, our understanding, our reason, our language, our intellect, all this we can account for; and though we may make occasional mistakes in unravelling the network of language and reason, true philosophy does not and need not despair of disentangling in the end the threads with which we ourselves or our forefathers have wrought the woof and warp of our thoughts. But the problem of sensation we must leave to be dealt with by other hands. We accept the discoveries of physical science. We believe that what is meant by seeing is really an ethereal tremor striking the retina and conveyed by the optic nerve to specialised cells of cerebral tissue. But how that tremor becomes a sensation of light, or to put it into more technical language, 'how[1] the excitation from the peripheral end of the afferent nerve reaches its termination in the sensifacient sensorium,' passes all understanding. Touch, odour, taste, colour, and sound are *our* sensations. We know them, and grow more perfect in our knowledge

[1] *What is Religion?* by C. N., p. 54; quotation from Huxley's *Science and Culture.*

of them from the first years of our childhood, till our organs of sense become blunted again by old age, fade away and perish by death. We also know that what causes these sensations are vibrations of some unknown medium which in the case of light has been called ether. But what relation there is between the effect, namely, our sensation of red, and the cause, namely, the 500 millions of millions of vibrations of ether in one second, neither philosophy nor physical science has yet been able to explain. We can only accept the fact, that vibration is translated into sensation, but how it is so translated will probably remain a mystery for ever.

How strange, therefore, that these sensations, which are the most wonderful elements of our mind, should have been looked upon as common, as low and material, compared with our own workmanship, the concepts and names, through which we handle them. If anything deserves the name of a revelation, it is our sensations, what is, as even Kant says, *given us*, what we cannot produce ourselves, but must accept as coming from a power other than ourselves. If we ascribe these sensations to matter, what can justify us in looking down on matter as something inferior, or, as some philosophers and founders of religion have held, as something vile, nay, as the very work of the devil? What should we be, without what we call the material or objective world, which, though it has been blasphemed against as the work of the devil, has also been called the creation of God? We might exist without it, but all that we prize most highly, our knowledge, our science, our philosophy, our morality, our whole intellectual and

spiritual life would, without an objective material world, be a mere blank. What does even Kant say, he who was so anxious to reestablish the claims of pure reason to her ancient possessions against the levelling tendencies of Locke and Hume: 'Concepts without intuitions are empty,' he says; 'intuitions without concepts are blind [1],' that is to say, Without our senses our mind would be empty, without our mind our senses would be blind.' To compare and weigh mind against sense, to call the one sublime, the other low, would be absurd. The one is as necessary as the other; only while what the senses bring to us, whether you call it divine or diabolic or neither, is certainly beyond all human comprehension, what the mind makes of it is perfectly intelligible.

The working of our mind.

Let us look into the workshop of what we call our mind. What is brought in? Sensations, or something which we feel.

We may go a step further, and ask what is meant by sensation, and our answer would be that feeling in the highest sense is resisting. In the fight of all against all, or, as others call it, under the pressure of the universe, resistance produces what may be called vibration, a coming and going, a yielding and returning, according to the pressure which impinges upon us and is repelled by us. Our very existence has been called by Schopenhauer resistance or will. There are different kinds of pressure. Some may pass us without being even perceived, others may crush and almost annihilate us. Our first sensations

[1] *Science of Thought*, p. 143.

may be simply sensations of pain or pleasure, according as we have to resist the impacts made upon us with violent effort, or are able to acquiesce in them without any effort. But there are also many kinds of pressure which give neither pain nor pleasure, but which produce in us a rhythmic movement, a yielding at first and then a corresponding recovery, a kind of swing-swang, which we call vibration, and which, in a sensuous and self-conscious being, is sensation in the widest sense of the word, though not yet perception. We may stare at the blue sky, the green forest, the red flowers; we may watch the flight of the clouds and listen to the song of birds; or we may be startled by a clap of thunder, frightened by a flash of lightning, and driven away by the terror of falling trees. We may be in a state of perturbation or of rest, and we may act under the influence of what we thus see and hear. We may even be said to act rationally, just as a dog is said to act rationally when, on seeing his master raise his whip, he runs away.

No percept without language. Virchow.

But, though we may imagine such a state, and though I do not like to contradict collectors of psychological curiosities who maintain they have actually experienced it, I hold myself as strongly as ever that not until we have a name and concept of sky, can we truly be said to see the sky; not till we have a name for blue, do we know that the sky is blue. Philosophers have long known this, but the best students of physical science also, have at last come to see the same. 'Only after the per-

ceptions of the senses have become fixed by language, are they, (the senses), that is to say, are *we* brought to a conscious possession and a real understanding of them[1].' These are not the speculations of a metaphysician or of a student of language, they are the *ipsissima verba* of one who stands foremost among men of science, and who in England as well as in Germany is recognised as one of the most accurate observers and most independent thinkers,—they are quoted from Professor Virchow.

Perceptions always finite.

Let us now consider the general character of our percepts. There is one characteristic which is common to all of them, and therefore to all our concepts and names,—to all we know,—they are always finite in themselves; or, if you like, the objects to which they refer are taken as finite. Some critics have objected to the term finite, and maintained that I ought to have used definite instead.

Finite and definite.

I see no objection whatever to using definite instead of finite; my only reason for preferring finite was that it seemed to me wider than definite, which is frequently used in the restricted sense of what has been defined by logical terms. The important point, however, is not the name, so long as we see clearly that all objects which we perceive and afterwards conceive and name must be circumscribed, must have been separated from their surroundings, must be measur-

[1] *Science of Thought*, p. 151.

able, and can thus only become perceivable and knowable and namable.

And this applies not only to finiteness in space and time, but also to finiteness in quality. We know now that all shades of colour, even those which our unassisted eye cannot distinguish, are due to so many and no more vibrations of ether within a given time. They are therefore finite in their very nature. The same applies to every tone which we hear. It consists of a finite or definite, i.e. a limited, or countable number of vibrations in a second. And as our perceptions of material objects, such as stones or trees or animals, must be outlined, must have a beginning and an end, our concepts and names also are possible only with well defined groups, or, at all events, with groups that ought to be well defined, if they are to answer their purpose. It is for this reason that concepts can be represented, as they have been by Euler and others, by spheres of greater or smaller extent, the definition determining the extension of a concept, as a circumference determines the extension of a sphere.

The finite implies the infinite.

But if finiteness is thus a necessary characteristic of our ordinary knowledge, it requires but little reflection to perceive that limitation or finiteness, in whatever sense we use it, always implies a something beyond. We are told that our mind is so constituted, whether it is our fault or not, that we cannot conceive an absolute limit. Beyond every limit we must always take it for granted that there is something else. But what is the reason of this? The reason why we can-

not conceive an absolute limit is because we never perceive an absolute limit; or, in other words, because in perceiving the finite we always perceive the infinite also. Descartes, who has so often been called the founder of modern philosophy, declares without any hesitation: 'I ought not to think that I perceive the infinite only by the negation of the finite, as I perceive rest and darkness by negation of motion and light; on the contrary, I clearly *per*ceive that there is more of reality in infinite substance than in finite, and therefore that, in a certain sense, the idea of the infinite is prior to me to the finite.'

The infinite in space.

I do not go quite so far as Descartes, but it seems to me beyond the reach of doubt, that even in our earliest and simplest perceptions we always perceive the finite and the infinite simultaneously, though it takes a long time before we clearly conceive and name the two as simply finite and infinite. If we perceive a square we can only perceive it by perceiving at the same time the space beyond the square. If we perceive the horizon, we perceive at the same time that which hems in our senses from going beyond the horizon. There is no limit which has not two sides, one turned towards us, the other turned towards what is beyond; and it is that Beyond which from the earliest days has formed the only real foundation of all that we call transcendental in our perceptual as well as in our conceptual knowledge, though no doubt it has also been peopled with the manifold creations of our poetic imagination. To the early nations the West, the setting of the sun,

was the extreme limit of the world—to the Buddhists the golden gate that opens to receive the setting sun in the West has become the Eastern gate of a more distant West, of Sukhâvatî, the land of bliss.

The infinite in time.

And what applies to space applies to time. As we cannot perceive and therefore conceive anything in space without a something beyond, we cannot perceive or conceive anything in time without a something beyond, a before and an after. Here, too, imagination has stretched its view as far as language will carry it. The number of years by which Hindus and Buddhists have tried to measure the infinitude of time are simply appalling—yet beyond the giddy height and depth which they have reached, there always remained that eternal Beyond from which no human mind can escape.

The infinite as cause.

Closely connected with the infinite, as it is postulated in space and time, is a third infinite, namely, that of cause. This has been called by some philosophers a mere illusion, a mere weakness of the human mind. There are some strong-minded philosophers who hold that a world is possible in which there is no cause and no effect, and in which two and two would not make four. But wherever that *Erehwon* may be, in our sublunary world, and I may add in our sublunary language, two and two will always make four, and as we can never shake off the chain of causality, we shall always be forced to admit not only a beyond beyond all beyonds, but also a cause beyond all causes.

If therefore our ordinary sensations and perceptions

are at the same time both of the finite and of the infinite, they naturally call forth and leave in our mind and in our language the concept of finite, and at the same time the concept of infinite. I speak here of a logical and psychological necessity only; and not yet of the realisation of these concepts of finite and infinite in history.

Misunderstandings.

It is extraordinary how difficult it is to avoid misunderstandings even on the part of honest critics, to say nothing of dishonest opponents. In answer to what I tried to show, that every single perception, so far as it is finite, involves, whether we are conscious of it or not, some perception of the infinite—which is really only a freer rendering of the old scholastic formula, *omnis determinatio est negatio*, I am told that there are many savage tribes even now who do not possess a word for finite and infinite. Is that an answer?

Savages without words for finite and infinite.

No one can doubt that the idea of the infinite, as a pure abstraction, is one of the latest, and that when we trace religion back to a perception of the infinite in nature or in man, we can mean no more than that the infinite, as hidden in the finite, left some impression on our senses and on our mind from the very first dawn of human intelligence, and that it is that very impression which, after passing through a long hibernation, grows and grows, and bursts forth at the very last, like the butterfly from the chrysalis, as the infinite in its most general, most abstract, most purified sense.

It is very easy to be positive about the languages of

ancient savages, for we know so little about them. But supposing that languages spoken by ancient savages were known in which no words occur for the boundless sky or the shoreless sea, this would not in the least affect our position. On the contrary, the more savage tribes can be produced without names and concepts for what is endless, deathless, or infinite, the stronger the proof that these concepts were only gradually evolved out of percepts in which they were contained, but from which they had not yet been separated.

The Duke of Argyll's Definition of Religion.

I must try to define my position as clearly as possible. I hold that the only justification for a belief in a Beyond of any kind whatever, lies in the original perception of something infinite which is involved in a large class of our ordinary sensuous and finite perceptions. But I hold equally strongly that this perception of a Beyond remained undeveloped for a long time, that it assumed its first form in the numberless names of what we call deities, till at last it threw off its husk and disclosed the ripe grain, namely the name and concept of a Beyond, of an Infinite, or, in the highest sense, of a Supreme Being.

Here is the point where I differ, for instance, from the Duke of Argyll. In his great work, *The Unity of Nature*, the Duke arrives at the conclusion that religion begins with 'a belief in supernatural beings, in living agencies, other and higher than our own' (p. 466), and he maintains that 'to conceive of the energies that are outside of man as like the energies that he feels within him, is simply to think of the un-

known in terms of the familiar and the known.' 'To think this,' he writes, 'can never have been to man any matter of difficult attainment. It must have been, in the very nature of things, the earliest, the simplest, and the most necessary of all conceptions' (p. 474).

We shall see hereafter that this definition contains a great deal of truth. The reason why I cannot accept it is that it makes religion begin with concepts, and not with percepts, and it is with percepts that all our knowledge, even the most abstract, ought to begin. We cannot perceive supernatural beings, or living agencies, but we can perceive the sky, and in perceiving it as finite, perceive at the same time the necessary complement of the Infinite. There are many steps which must have preceded such concepts as 'energies without, being like the energies within us.' To conceive and name energies within us is a process unknown to the large majority of mankind even at the present day, and to think of energies without as like the energies within, is very different from seeing the sky or the fire, and conceiving and naming such beings as *Dyaus* or *Zeus*, as *Indra* or *Agni*. The Duke speaks of a belief in superhuman beings, and considers such concepts as a being and a superhuman being as very early and very simple. But the very verb *to be* is a very late creation, and the noun *being* much later still. Even Cicero looked still in vain for such a word as *ens* or *essentia*[1].

It is, on the contrary, one of the most interesting subjects for the historian of religion to see how the more abstract concept of superhuman beings was slowly evolved out of such concrete and full concepts as *Dyaus*,

[1] Seneca, *Epist.* 58.

sky, *Agni*, fire, *Vâyu*, wind, *Sûrya*, sun. Instead of the more general concept coming first and being gradually invested with differentiating attributes, history shows that the differentiated and almost dramatic characters came first, and, by being divested of their various attributes, left behind them the more general, but, at the same time, more exalted concepts of beings or superhuman beings. There is no trace whatever, so far as I know, of any of the early nations having first elaborated the concepts and names of superhuman beings, and then having connected them with various attributes. Among most nations also, so far as historical evidence enables us to judge, a belief in many superhuman beings preceded a belief in one superhuman being, and for a long time what seem to us two contradictory beliefs, a belief in one and a belief in many gods, were held to be perfectly compatible in the same religion. The Duke of Argyll, unless his own words misrepresent him, represents the connection of these superhuman beings with material objects as a later phase. 'The nature of that connection,' he writes, 'may not be always, it may not even in any case, be perfectly clear and definite. Sometimes the material object is an embodiment, sometimes it is a symbol, often it may be only an abode. Nor is it wonderful that there should be a like variety in the particular objects which have come to be so regarded. Sometimes they are such material objects as the heavenly bodies. Sometimes they are natural productions of our own planet, such as particular trees, or particular animals, or particular things in themselves inanimate, such as springs, or streams, or mountains. Sometimes they are manufactured articles,

stones or blocks of wood, cut into some shape which have a meaning either obvious or traditional' (p. 480).

There are manifestly two ways only in which the truth of such statements can be tested. We have to ask whether they rest on historical facts or on any logical necessity. *Tertium non datur.* Now, I can see no logical necessity for admitting even the possibility of any concepts which are not founded on previous percepts. On the contrary, if only we define these terms properly, the existence of concepts without previous percepts would become self-contradictory.

And as to facts, I have no hesitation in saying that, so far as our knowledge of ancient religions reaches at present, they do not support the opinion that religion began anywhere with the general concept of superhuman beings, and that at a later time only these mere beings were connected with differentiating qualities. Logically, no doubt, the general comes first, and the particular follows; but what is first by itself, is not first to us, and in the growth of concepts the historical process is generally the reverse of the logical. I hold that before man could speak even of the infinite sky or Dyaus, he must actually have *perceived* something infinite, and must have been brought in sensuous contact with something not finite like everything else; but *to conceive* an infinite being, or even a number of infinite beings, is a very different process, which comes in earlier, it is true, than we expected, but still much later than the naming and conceiving of the infinite sky, the infinite earth, the infinite sea.

While the Duke considers that religious thought began with the conception of superhuman beings, and

that these were *afterwards* connected with distinguishing mythological attributes, it seems to me that we must learn the very opposite lesson from history, namely that religious thought began with the naming of a large number of clearly marked and differentiated beings, such as Sky, Dawn, Thunder, Lightning, Storm, Mountains, Trees, etc., and that the concept of superhuman beings arose afterwards, as a concept common to all, when divested of their characteristic differences. In the Veda we look in vain for words of so abstract a character as superhuman beings or personal agencies. Even the words for gods in general, such as deva, bright, vasu, brilliant, asura, living, are still full of physical meaning in the more ancient hymns. We are confronted from the first with such strongly marked dramatic characters as Dyaus, the bright sky, Varuna, the dark sky, Marut, the storms, Agni, the fire, Ushas, the dawn. We can understand the origin of these mythological characters, because in their material aspect at least, whatever may have been suspected behind them, they offered themselves to the eyes and ears of those who framed their names and believed in their existence. But mere superhuman beings, without definite attributes, never presented themselves to their senses, and could never, therefore, have found an entrance into their intellect. Dyaus in the Veda was originally a name of the sky, but of an active and subjective sky. The purely material characteristics of the sky are still there, faintly visible; but they slowly vanish, and in the end there remains the name only, which coupled with pitâ, father, appears in the earliest Aryan prayers, as Dyaushpitâ, *Jupiter*, Heaven-father, and

in the end, even in the language of philosophers, as the Supreme Being. And what applies to the name of Dyaus, applies likewise to the names of other gods. They are names of material objects or phenomena of nature, though all of them with the background of the infinite behind them. They lose their individual character very gradually, and in the end only stand before us sublimised into superhuman beings or personal agencies. The germ of the superhuman, or, as I like to call it by a more general name, of the infinite element, was there from the first, but it was involved as yet in sensuous perception, not yet evolved in a conceptual name.

Early Names of the Infinite.

But though these conceptual names of superhuman beings and living agencies are clearly, from an historical point of view, of later growth, it is true nevertheless that we meet with names for the Beyond or the Infinite in documents of great antiquity. I see, however, that some remarks of mine on the early occurrence of names for the Infinite, have caused some misapprehension, which I must try to remove. I expressed my surprise that such a name as Aditi should occur in the Rig-veda, for, so far as we know at present, Aditi is derived from the negative a and dita, bound, so that it seems to have expressed from the beginning an unbound, unbounded, or infinite being. But the Rig-veda, though it is the most ancient document of Aryan thought within our reach, contains relics of different ages, and even its most ancient relics are relics of Aryan thought only, and are separated by an immeasurable distance from what people are pleased to call the beginning of all things.

We can clearly see the linguistic and intellectual *detritus* on which the Veda rests, and though the occurrence of such words as Aditi will always remain startling, it can never be used to prove that the Vedic Rishis or their distant Aryan ancestors began life with a clear conception and definite name of the Infinite in the abstract.

Mana.

My remarks on *Mana* also have been supposed to mean something very different from what I intended. *Mana*[1] is the name, not of any individual superhuman being, but it is used, we are told, by most of the Pacific races, in the sense of a supernatural power, distinct from all physical powers, yet acting everywhere in nature, and believed to be conciliated by prayers and sacrifices. If that name is spread over the whole Pacific, we are justified in supposing that it existed before the final separation of the Polynesian races, and such a date, however vague, may, when we deal with illiterate races, be called an early date.

But this is very different from supposing that *Mana* was the most primitive concept of the whole Polynesian race, and that its whole religion and mythology were founded on it. The mythological and religious language of this race, so far from being what people call primitive or primordial, shows so many antecedents, so much that is already petrified, decayed, and unintelligible, that the Vedic language may be called primitive as compared with it. I never could share the opinion that the thoughts of savage races, simply because they are the thoughts

[1] *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 55.

of savage races, carry us back into a more distant antiquity than the thoughts of civilised and literate nations. These so-called savages are, so far as we know, not a day older or younger on the surface of the earth than the present inhabitants of India, China, or even of England. They have probably passed through more changes and chances than our own ancestors, unless we assume that by some special providence they were kept stationary or preserved in spirits for the special benefit of future anthropologists. In the eyes of an historian, therefore, a word like *Mana*, though extremely curious and instructive, can claim no greater antiquity than the stratum of language in which it has been found. It may be an ancient survival, a mediaeval revival, or a modern imagination, but it cannot possibly be forced into an argument to prove that religion began anywhere with a belief in supernatural beings or living agencies, and not with a naming of the great phenomena of nature behind which such beings or agencies were suspected.

Manito.

The last word which I mentioned as a name for a supreme being without any physical attributes was *Manito*. This word, used by the Red Indians as a name of the Supreme Spirit, has been proved to mean originally no more than Beyond. Here, therefore, there seemed to be another proof that religion among savage people might begin with such abstract concepts as that of Beyond. The fact itself was so curious that I thought it right to point it out, though as we know the word *Manito* and its various dialectic forms in documents of the last century only, I never under-

stood by what right it could possibly be transferred to the primitive periods of humanity. And here a very useful lesson has been read to anthropologists, in whose eyes every nineteenth-century savage becomes an antediluvian. For, according to the most recent researches, there seems to be little doubt that *Manito* was introduced in the last century only by Christian Missionaries as a name for the Supreme Being, and had never been used before in that sense by the Red Indians themselves [1].

I hope I have thus made it clear that in citing these names of the Infinite, whether in the Veda, or among the Pacific tribes, or among the Red Indians, I never intended to imply that they could have represented under any circumstances the earliest phases of religious thought. The perception of the Infinite, which is the necessary foundation of all religious thought, is something quite different. It is the perception of the infinite within the finite, and hence, whenever these perceptions are raised to a conceptual level and named, the names of the finite remain and become imperceptibly the names of the Infinite.

Does the Vedic Religion begin with Sacrifice?

Let us now consider another objection. The perception of the Infinite, it has been said [2], can have nothing to do with the origin of religion, because the Vedic religion begins not with faith in infinite beings, but with sacrifice.

These are bold statements. First of all, it should never be forgotten that the deities invoked in the

[1] See Brinton, *Myths of the New World*, p. 53.
[2] Gruppe, p. 221.

Veda must have existed long before the hymns which we possess were composed. Some of them exist in other Aryan languages and must therefore have been framed prior even to the Aryan separation. The origin of their names lies, therefore, far beyond the Vedic age, and if they were originally names of finite phenomena, conceived as infinite in the evolution of religious thought, whatever the Vedic hymns and Brâhmaṇas might say to the contrary, would be of very little weight. But, secondly, what possible meaning can we connect with the statement that the Vedic religion begins with sacrifice?

When sacrifices come in, for whom are they meant? Surely for somebody, for beings who are the object of faith, for beings different from things we can touch or see, for infinite beings, if only in the sense that their life has no end, and that they are in that sense, immortal, endless, infinite.

And what can be the meaning of such a sentence (p. 221) as this, that in the Veda 'the faithful knows that the lighting of the matutinal sacrificial fire drives away the demons of night, and supports the approaching sun-god in his fight against them. He has been taught by his ancestors that the sacrificial potion and the intoxicating Soma invigorate Indra for his fight with the dragon, and he sacrifices gladly, because he hates the night, which is full of dangers, and because he loves the break of day. For this reason, and not from a desire for the infinite, does he call the bright deities his friends and the sky his father. And when the faithful has performed his sacrificial rite, he expects that heaven will do his part, increase the cattle of the faithful, fertilise his fields and destroy his enemies.

In this very finite sphere does the religion of those early days have its being.'

If we dissolve these assertions into their constituent elements, we shall find that they have absolutely no bearing whatever on the question at issue. We wanted to know how the concept of any so-called gods or divine powers arose, of beings to whom at a later time sacrifices may be offered; and we are told that the faithful knows that his sacrifice will support the sun-god in his fight against the demons of night! (p. 276.) But here everything which we wish to account for is taken for granted. When people had arrived at the conception of a sun-god and of nocturnal demons, the whole battle of the human intellect was won. But who ever told them of a sun-god, or, as we should say, what perceptions led them on to such a concept and such a name? Then again, whence came that idea that a sacrifice could invigorate the sun-god? We are told that man learnt it from his ancestors. Yes, but we want to know how his ancestors learnt it. We are really speaking of two totally different periods in the development of human thought. If man has once arrived at the idea of bright deities, we can understand why he should call them his friends; but why did he call anything bright deities?

Then again, the idea that an intoxicating beverage like Soma, taken by the sacrificer, should invigorate the god fighting against the dragon, is so late, so secondary, even in so late and so secondary a phase of religion as we see represented in the Veda, that it is difficult enough to discover all the missing links in the intellectual chain that led to it. But to suppose that religion could begin with Indra drinking Soma

offered at a sacrifice, is like supposing that the Aryan language could begin with French.

And is it really a very finite sphere of thought, if people have actually brought themselves to believe, not only that there are bright gods in heaven, but that these gods in heaven can hear our prayers, and that, though unseen themselves, they are able to increase the cattle of the faithful and destroy their enemies? Where in all our finite experience is there any evidence for such thoughts, thoughts which become intelligible only by patient research, just as French words become intelligible only, if we trace them back through various phases to Latin, and from Latin to some Aryan root the meaning of which is sometimes so different that, without a knowledge of the intermediate links, we could never believe that the two had any organic relationship at all.

Germs of the Infinite in the Veda.

Any one who is able to understand the Veda, will find no difficulty in discovering the true germs of the infinite in the conception of what the Vedic poets call *devas*. It makes no difference whether we call those poets primitive or modern, savage or civilised, so long as we know what thoughts they were capable of. Now the thought of the infinite, in space and time at least, was certainly not beyond their grasp.

When a Vedic poet, such as Vasish*tha*, stood on a high mountain in the land of the Seven Rivers, as he called the Punjab, and let his eye travel across land and water as far as it could reach, had he not a perception of the infinite?

When a Greek hero, such as Odysseus, was tossed

about on the vast commotion of the waves, seeing no stars and no land anywhere, had he no perception of the infinite? And are we so different from them?

The Infinitely Great.

When we ourselves,—savages as we are, according to Bacon, in spite of all our syllogisms [1],—have learnt to look upon the boundless earth with its boundless ocean, no longer as a stupendous mass, but as a small globe or globule, moving with other globes across the infinite firmament; when wider infinitudes than the infinite firmament open before us, and the sun, which was once so near and dear to us, becomes a fiery mass, the magnitude of which defies our power of imagination; when afterwards, the magnitude of the sun and its distance from us, which is expressed in millions of miles, dwindle down again into nothing as compared with the nearest star, which, we are told, lies twenty millions of millions of miles from our earth, so that a ray of light, if travelling with the velocity of 187,000 miles in a second, would take more than three years in reaching us;—nay even this is not yet all,—when we are assured by high astronomical authorities that there are more than one thousand millions of such stars which our telescopes have discovered, and that there may be millions of millions of suns within our sidereal system which are as yet beyond the reach of our best telescopes; and that even that sidereal system need not be regarded as single within the universe, but that thousands of millions of sidereal systems may be recognised in the galaxy [2]—if we listen to all this, do we not feel the overwhelming pressure of the

[1] See De Bonald, *Mél.* i. 100.

[2] See R. A. Proctor, in *Secular Thought*, April 21, 1888.

infinite, the same infinite which had impressed the mind of Vasishtha and Odysseus, and from which no one can escape who has eyes to see or ears to hear?

The Infinitely Small.

But there is another infinite, the infinitely small, which is even more wonderful than the infinitely distant and great. When we turn away our eyes from the immensity which surrounds us, and look at one small drop of water taken from the boundless ocean, a new universe seems to open before us. There are in that drop of water atoms of atoms moving about, some visible, some invisible, some hardly imaginable. A high authority, Sir Henry Roscoe, has told us 'that the chemists are now able to ascertain the relative position of atoms so minute that millions upon millions of them can stand upon a needle's point.' Is not that infinitude of atoms as wonderful as the infinitude of stars?

Infinite Inseparable from Finite.

I maintain then that the infinite is the necessary complement of the finite in every human mind, that it was involved in the first perceptions and became part of the silent clockwork within us, though it may have taken thousands of years before the necessity was felt to give it its final expression, as the Infinite, or the Unknown, or the Beyond.

The Concept of Cause.

And it is the same with the idea of cause and causality. There may be ancient, there may be modern savages, who have no such word as cause. Does that prove that they had no other expression for that concept? When we now speak of the cause of the world, we could in the childhood of our thought and

language have said no more than 'the father or progenitor of heaven and earth,' *ganitâ dyâvâprithivyoḥ*; or, if our thought dwelt more on the forming and shaping of the world, the carpenter of heaven and earth, *tvashtâ* (τέκτων) *dyâvâprithivyoḥ*. When afterwards it was felt to be less important to dwell on the act of begetting or shaping, when in fact it was felt desirable to drop these special features, human thought and language reduced the begetter and shaper to a mere maker or creator. And when those names also were felt to be too full of meaning, they were lightened once more till they conveyed no more than author, source, origin, principle, cause. This is the historical and genetic account of the concept of cause. It began with a real maker, like unto ourselves when we do a thing and see that it is done; it ended with something that is neither human, nor divine, nor even real in the sense of perceptible by the senses—a mere cause.

I hope that I have thus made it clear in what sense I consider the perception of the infinite to have, from the very beginning, formed an ingredient, or if you like, a necessary complement to all finite knowledge[1]. I am quite willing to admit that finite and infinite are not always quite adequate terms to express all that we want to express, and that I sometimes should prefer visible and invisible, known and unknown, definite and indefinite. But every one of these expressions proves even more inadequate in certain circumstances than finite and infinite, and if technical terms have once been properly defined, I do not see how they can be misunderstood.

[1] This point has been carefully reasoned out by D. G. Thompson in his *Religious Sentiments*, London, 1888.

LECTURE VI.

THE INFINITE IN NATURE, IN MAN, AND IN THE SELF.

Positivist Objections.

WHEN it has been my chief endeavour to show that religion did not begin with abstract concepts and a belief in purely extra-mundane beings, but that its deepest roots can be traced back to the universal stratum of sensuous perception, it is somewhat hard to be told that 'I must necessarily admit an extra-mundane Logos in man, and derive mythology and religion from extra-mundane causes' (Gruppe, p. 218). Still more extraordinary does it seem that the ground on which this charge is founded should be my holding in some modified form the opinion of Schleiermacher, Wuttke, Hellwald, and others, that 'the infinite can be known in the finite only, and that it should be known here always and everywhere.'

Again, I am told (p. 222) that if I trace the concept of the infinite back to the most primitive percepts of not quite finite things, I must mean by the infinite 'a potentia of the infinite, the infinitely infinite, the infinite *per se*, the absolute.' If these words have any meaning at all, they would show a complete misapprehension of my position. I spoke of the sensuous pressure of the infinite which is contained in the simplest perceptions of our senses, while I represented the pure concept of the infinite, to say nothing of the absolute, as the very last result of a long historical

process of intellectual evolution. To fix the exact time when the indications of the infinite, which are latent in all sensuous perceptions, became recognised either in mythology or religion, and lastly in philosophy, is completely beyond our power. It is enough if we can show that the rudiments of later mythological, religious and philosophical expressions were present in what I call the early pressure of the infinite upon our senses. I do not object if, from another point of view, this may be called an intellectual pressure [1] also; but what is really important is to understand that mankind did not begin with the abstract concepts of infinity, still less of the absolute, whatever that may mean, but with the simplest perceptions which, in addition to their finite contents, implied likewise something beyond the finite.

The question, again, whether this evolution of thought, beginning with the simplest perceptions, and ending with the highest abstractions, was teleological or not—whether it was purposed, whether it was meant to lead us on to a higher conception of the world—does not concern us at present. It is enough for us that it was real, that it is strictly historical, and that it is at the same time intelligible. Whether it was meant or intended, by whom it was intended, and for what it was intended, these are questions which need not disturb our equanimity. So far as I can see, the evidence for and against a teleological interpretation is equally feeble, but, at all events it need not disquiet those who are only concerned with the establishment of facts, and with a suggestion of their possible origin.

[1] 'Aber dieser Druck ist ein intellectueller.' Gruppe, p. 225.

Historical Evolution.

My principal object has always been to discover an historical evolution or a continuous growth in religion as well as in language. It seems strange, therefore, that while in England some Darwinians, though not Darwin himself, have attacked me for not being a thorough-going evolutionist, Professor Gruppe should try so very hard to prove that I am an evolutionist, and that therefore I am behind the time, as time is understood in certain quarters. Evolution, we are told (pp. 233, 235), is but the disguised sister of Hegelian speculation. We ought to be transformationists, and no longer evolutionists. I do not know what transformations may still await us, but for the present I certainly am and mean to remain an evolutionist in the study of language, mythology, and religion—that is to say, I shall always try to discover in them an intelligible historical growth. That I have not ascribed any evolutionary power to ideas or concepts by themselves, apart from the persons by whom they are held, and uninfluenced by the objective world by which they are determined, I need hardly attempt to prove, considering that I have always adopted as the foundation of all philosophy Kant's well-known principle, that concepts without intuitions are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind. There are misapprehensions against which it is difficult to defend oneself, because it seems incredible that they should ever have been raised.

Positivist Point of View.

Nor do I believe that Professor Gruppe or anybody else really thinks me capable of believing in self-evolving Hegelian ideas, floating about in metaphysical

air or blown into our face like soap bubbles by an extra-mundane Logos. On the contrary, he knows, and he says so himself, that my starting-point is from a positivist point of view impregnable[1], and it is exactly this impregnable character of the position I have taken that has roused so much anger among positivist philosophers.

But now comes the strangest of all arguments. The premisses from which I start are admitted to be impregnable, but as the facts in the history of religion are against them, it follows that after all, my premisses, positivist though they be, must be wrong.

It is generally supposed that when we come to facts, all controversy must end, but we shall see that facts as well as fictions require careful handling.

Rig-veda.

I had taken some of my facts from the Rig-veda, not because I consider that these hymns can bring us near to the very cradle of religious concepts, but simply because we possess no literary documents, so far as I know, that can bring us nearer to it, at least on Aryan ground. I maintained that when the Vedic Rishis celebrated the rivers, the dawn, the sky, or Indra, the god of the sky, they did not simply mean the objects which they saw, but also something beyond, call it unknown, indefinite, infinite, or divine.

Here I am flatly contradicted. 'The Hindu of the older Rig-veda,' we are told (p. 221), 'does not adore the Infinite which lies within or behind the dawn, but the dawn herself,' whosoever that may be. Yes, 'who-

[1] Gruppe, p. 222, 'Der Ausgangspunkt ist vom positivistischen Standpunkt aus unanfechtbar.'

soever that may be,' ὅστις ποτ' ἐστίν, and this 'whosoever that may be' is exactly what I mean by the invisible, the unknown, or the infinite behind the mere splendour of the morning rays. Who ever maintained that the Hindu adored the Infinite in its abstract form, or the Infinite by itself, as lying within or behind the dawn? All I said was that in choosing the dawn as a recipient of his praises, the Vedic poet, whether he was as yet conscious of it or not, meant something more than the definite dawn, the reflected splendour of the sun, that lasted for a short time every day, and then vanished for ever. He meant something within or behind the dawn which did not vanish, which came again day after day, which manifested itself to his senses, but could never be fully grasped by them. This is so clear and so undeniable that nothing but the weakest objections could be raised against it.

We are assured that 'nothing was further from the thoughts of the ancient poets than to try to comprehend or actually to grasp the incomprehensible and ungraspable, to fly up to the solar bird and there to see the eternal miracle face to face.' Who ever suggested such wild flights of fancy for the Vedic poets? It is wonderful enough that in their conception of one of their deities, of Aditi, the concept of the infinite should have found so early an expression, though here too probably at first under the image of the dawn or what lies beyond the dawn[1]. We can

[1] 'Aditi, an ancient god or goddess, is in reality the earliest name to express the Infinite; not the Infinite as the result of a long process of abstract reasoning, but the visible Infinite, visible by the naked eye, the endless expanse beyond the earth, beyond the clouds, beyond the sky. That was called A-diti, the un-bound, the unbounded; one might almost say, but for fear of misunderstandings,

see again and again how the germs of the infinite, which are latent in such concepts as that of the dawn from the very beginning, burst out under different forms in the hymns of the Rig-veda.

The Dawn.

One of the salient features of the dawn was its wide-spreading splendour. All the other luminaries had their small circumscribed spheres. The dawn, however, was always called the far-reaching, reaching to the very ends of heaven and earth. Thus we read, 'The Dawns adorn themselves with splendours in the ends of the sky[1].'

End and Endless.

This end and the ends of heaven and earth are often mentioned as the limit of everything that can be seen. We hear of the enemies of Indra who could not reach the end of heaven and earth[2], and of the birds which at the time of dawn come forth from the ends of heaven[3]. Then we meet with questions as to where the end of the waters in heaven may be. In one passage the poet says: 'Where is the highest point, where is their lowest, O waters (of heaven), where is your middle, where your end[4]?' This is how ideas sprout and grow, and this is how the idea of the endless and infinite opens slowly and quietly before our very eyes.

the Absolute. Aditi is a name for the distant East, but Aditi is more than the dawn. Aditi is beyond the dawn, and in one place (I. 113, 19) the dawn is called the face of Aditi.' (M. M., *Vedic Hymns*, pp. 230–231. See also *The Science of Language*, vol. i. p. 241, ii. p. 614.)

[1] Ví *añ*gate diváḥ ánteshu aktúñ—ushásaḥ. Rv. VII. 79, 2.

[2] Ná yé diváḥ *p*rithivyáḥ ántam ápuḥ. Rv. I. 33, 10.

[3] Diváḥ ántebhyaḥ pári. Rv. I. 49, 3.

[4] Kvã svit ágram kvã budhnáḥ ásâm ắpaḥ mádhyam kvã vaḥ nûnám ántaḥ. Rv. X. 111, 8.

Heaven and earth are called at first wide and broad, afterwards dûre-ante, with distant ends (I. 185, 7). Then the roads are mentioned on which day and night wander across heaven and earth, and these roads are distinctly called ananta or endless. Thus we read, 'The same road of the two sisters, that is, of day and night, is endless[1].' Again, 'Wide and endless roads go round heaven and earth on all sides[2].' After this there was but a small step before the light of the sun could be called endless (I. 115, 5), before heaven was called endless (I. 130, 3; IV. 1, 7), and before the power of several of the gods received the same name. Thus we read, 'The end of thy power, O Indra, cannot be reached[3].' The same is said of the might of the Maruts, the storms (I. 167, 9; I. 64, 10); and of Vishnu (VII. 99, 2); and at last even of the power of the rivers Sarasvatî and Sindhu (VI. 61, 8; X. 75, 3).

Endless in the Avesta.

The same intellectual process which in the Veda is carried on before our eyes in all its completeness, can be watched, though in a more fragmentary form only, in the Avesta also. There, too, we read, for instance, in the XIII Yast (I. 2), the Yast of the Farvardîn (i.e. the Fravashis):

'2. Through their brightness and glory, O Zarathustra, I (Ahura Mazda) maintain that sky there above, shining and seen afar, and encompassing this earth all around.

3. It looks like a palace, that stands built of a heavenly

[1] Samânáḥ ádhvâ svásroḥ anantáḥ. Rv. I. 113, 3.
[2] Anantâsaḥ urávaḥ visvátaḥ sîm pári dyâvâprithivî yanti pánthâḥ. Rv. V. 47, 2.
[3] Nahí te ántaḥ sávasaḥ parinése. Rv. I. 54, 1; see also I. 100, 15; VI. 29, 5.

substance, firmly established, *with ends that lie far apart*, shining in its body of ruby over the three-thirds (of the earth); it is like a garment inlaid with stars, made of a heavenly substance, that Mazda puts on, along with Mithra and Rashnu and Spenta-Ârmaiti, *and on no side can the eye perceive the end of it.*'

This is what I meant when I said that the infinite was perceived in the finite phenomena of nature, till those phenomena themselves were conceived and named as endless beings.

Theogonic Elements.

Every one of our perceptions comprises a multitude of ingredients, though we are not aware of them till we call them by a name. We think of the dawn and of heaven and earth at first neither as finite nor infinite; but as soon as our attention is called to their character, we speak of them and conceive them as either finite or infinite. Not every object, however, of our sensuous perception can be thus called and conceived. A stone is not infinite, nor a shell, nor an apple, nor a dog, and hence they have no theogonic capacity. But a river or a mountain, and still more the sky and the dawn, possess theogonic capacity, because they have in themselves from the beginning something going beyond the limits of sensuous perception, something which, for want of a better word, I must continue to call infinite.

All this Professor Gruppe, if he had read with a willing and unprejudiced mind, would easily have discovered in my former explanations, instead of assuring me and other Vedic scholars 'that Vedic poets do not fly up to the solar bird.' It is painful to see a real scholar condescend to such unscholarlike manœuvres.

How the Perception of the Infinite led to Religious Ideas.

If then we have clearly established the fact that our experience, or our states of consciousness, or our Ego-knowledge, whatever you like to call it, consists of perceptions of the finite, and with it, at the same time, of the infinite, we may now go on to divide off that portion in the perceptions of the finite and the infinite which constitutes the proper domain of religion; and we have to show how these perceptions are worked up into religious concepts and names.

It may, no doubt, be said that the perception of the infinite is in itself a perception of something negative only, of something which is not the finite such as we perceive it in all its variety, and of which therefore we can predicate nothing except that it is. We know that the infinite is, but we do not know what it is, because it always begins where our finite knowledge seems to end.

This is perfectly true logically, but it is not true psychologically. The human mind in discovering the infinite behind the finite, does not separate the two. We can never draw a line where the finite ends and the infinite begins. The sky, for instance, was perceived as blue or grey, it had its horizon, and so far it was perceived as finite; but it was at the same time the infinite sky, because it was felt that beyond what was seen of the sky there is and must be an infinite complement which no eye could see. The infinite *per se*, as a mere negative, would have had no interest for primitive man; but as the background, as the support, as the subject or the cause of the finite in its many manifestations, it came in from the earliest period of human thought. There were in

fact few finite things which were conceived without some infinite complement.

Tangible, Semi-tangible, Intangible Objects.

Let us see how this arose. It might seem as if our five senses delivered to us nothing but objects complete in themselves, which we can touch and handle all round, which we can smell, taste, see and hear. But is that so?

It is true[1], no doubt, of such objects as stones, bones, shells, flowers, berries, logs of wood. All these are complete in themselves, and no one would suspect anything in them beyond what we can see and touch.

But very soon our surroundings accustom us to other objects which seem indeed perfect in themselves, but which do not lie completely within the grasp of our senses. Without being aware of it, we are made familiar with objects which we treat as if we knew them as well as a stone, or a bone, or a shell, but which, if we examine them more closely, contain more or less of an unknown residuum. I call this first class of objects, those which we know all round, *tangible* objects, and I distinguish them from *semi-tangible* and *intangible* objects, which we shall now have to examine.

Trees.

Trees, mountains, rivers and the earth seem all very tangible and completely perceptible objects, but are they so? We may stand beneath a tree, touch it, look up to it, but our senses can never take in the whole of it. Its deepest roots are beyond our reach,

[1] See *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 180 seq.

its highest branches tower high above our head. Besides, there is something in the tree which, for want of a better name, we call its life, and which to an unscientific, and possibly to a scientific generation likewise, is something mysterious, something beyond the reach of our senses, and it may be, of our understanding also. A tree, therefore, has something intangible, something unknowable, something infinite in it. It combines, as I said, the finite and the infinite, or it presents to us something infinite under a finite appearance [1].

Mountains.

The same applies to mountains. The early settlers of this earth, when standing at the foot of a mountain and looking up to where its head vanishes in the clouds, could not help feeling overawed by these stupendous giants. We take all these things for granted, and we have learnt to know what is beyond these mountains; nay, how they were made, and how they can be unmade. But to the early people a mountain-range marked the end of their little world. They saw the dawn, the sun, the moon and the stars rising above the mountain-tops, the very sky seemed to rest on them; but what was beyond or beneath or above, no one could guess. In later times the highest mountains were often believed to be the seats of the gods, and the highest points were often chosen as the most appropriate for building temples to the gods. And let us think not of our own small valleys and wooded hills only, but of that country where the Vedic hymns were first uttered, and where Dr.

[1] See *Hibbert Lectures* by John Rhys, p. 216.

Hooker saw from one point twenty snow-peaks each over 20,000 feet high, supporting the blue dome of an horizon that stretched over one-hundred-and-sixty degrees. We shall then more easily understand how the view of a temple resting on such columns might call out a feeling of the presence of the infinite even in the most simple-minded spectator.

Rivers.

Next to mountains come rivers and waterfalls. Here too we see indeed the mass of water which daily passes before our eyes, but we never see the whole river, we never see the same river. Without thinking of all the benefits which rivers confer on those who settle on their banks, by fertilising their fields, feeding their flocks, and defending them better than any fortress against the assaults of their enemies; without thinking also of the fearful destruction that can be wrought by an angry river, or of the sudden death of those who sink into its waves, the mere sight of a torrent coming they know not whence and going they know not whither, must have called forth a feeling in the heart of man that he stood in the presence of powers which were to him invisible and infinite, and which he afterwards called divine.

Earth.

Nothing again may seem to us more simple and real than the earth on which we stand. But if we want to speak of it as something complete in itself, like a stone, or a shell, or an apple, our senses fail us, and we can trust to our imagination only. What corresponds to the name earth is not something of which we can see the horizon, not something finite, but something ex-

tending far beyond our sensuous horizon, something visible to a very small extent only, and beyond that again undefined, unknown, or infinite.

In the perception of these so-called *semi-tangible* objects we see the steps supplied by nature herself on which the human mind advanced, almost unconsciously, from the finite to the not altogether finite, and at last to the infinite. It is important to observe that these steps were not the result of reasoning; they were advances almost inevitable in the slow discovery and conquest of the world by which man was surrounded.

But besides these *semi-tangible* objects, our experience supplies us with others which are altogether *intangible.*

Clouds, Stars, Moon, Sun, Sky.

Strange as it may seem, there are many things which we can see, but which we cannot touch. The clouds are visible, but generally not tangible. But even if we reckoned the clouds among our semi-tangible percepts, there is the sky, there are the stars, and the moon, and the sun, none of which can ever be touched. In all these percepts the infinite preponderates over the finite, and the mind of man is driven, whether he likes it or not, to admit something beyond the finite. When from some high mountain-peak our eye travels as far as it can, watching the clouds, and the sky, and the setting sun and the rising stars, it is not by any process of conscious reasoning that we conclude there is something infinite beyond the sky, beyond the sun, beyond the stars. It might truly be said that we are actually brought in sensuous contact with it; we see and feel it. In feeling the limit, we

cannot help feeling also what is beyond the limit; we are in the actual presence of a visible infinite.

Demi-Gods and Great Gods.

If then we look at these three classes of *tangible*, *semi-tangible*, and *intangible* objects, we shall see at once that while the first class lent itself to no religious development—for fetishism or the worship of stones and bones is a retrogressive, not a progressive religious development—the second class has supplied ample material for what we call *demi-gods*, while the third class contains the germs of most of the *great gods* of the ancient world. What Hesiod called the first-born gods were mostly identical with semi-tangible manifestations. 'Tell us,' he says, 'how at first gods and the earth arose, and the rivers, and the endless sea, with swollen waves, and the bright stars and the wide sky above; and those who arose hence, the gods, the givers of good things[1].'

What we call spirits of the trees, or Dryades, spirits of the brooks, or Nymphs, were likewise originally semi-tangible percepts. Seneca, in one of his letters, says: 'We contemplate with awe the heads or sources of the great rivers. We erect altars to a rivulet which suddenly and vigorously breaks forth from the dark. We worship the springs of hot water, and certain lakes are sacred to us, on account of their darkness and unfathomable depth.' Here we have a recognition of the sense of the infinite as the source of religious imagination and worship.

[1] Hesiod, *Theog.* i. 108:

Εἴπατε δ' ὡς τὰ πρῶτα θεοὶ καὶ γαῖα γένοντο,
καὶ ποταμοὶ καὶ πόντος ἀπείριτος, οἴδματι θύων,
ἄστρα τε λαμπετόωντα καὶ οὐρανὸς εὐρὺς ὑπερθεν,
οἵ τ' ἐκ τῶν ἐγένοντο θεοὶ, δωτῆρες ἐάων.

Intangible objects grow mostly into great gods, and when Ennius exclaims,

Adspice hoc sublime candens, quem invocant omnes Iovem[1],

we see how to him the sublime light in the highest heaven was the first manifestation of the highest god.

The Infinite in Man as an Object.

But the infinite was not discovered behind the veil of nature only, though its manifestation in physical phenomena was no doubt, as we shall see, the most primitive and the most fertile source of mythological and religious ideas. There were two more manifestations of the infinite and the unknown, which must not be neglected, if we wish to gain a complete insight into the theogonic process through which the human mind had to pass from its earliest days. The infinite disclosed itself not only in nature, but likewise in man, looked upon as an object, and lastly in man, looked upon as a subject.

The Something behind Man.

Man looked upon as an object, as a living thing, was felt to be more than a mere part of nature, more than a river, or a tree, or an animal. There was something in man, whether it was called breath or spirit or soul or mind, which was perceived and yet not perceived, which was behind the veil of the body, and from a very early time was believed to remain free from decay, even when illness and death had destroyed the body in which it seemed to dwell. There was nothing to force even the simplest peasant to believe that because he saw his father dead and his body decaying, therefore what was known as the man him-

[1] Cic. *N. D.* ii. 25, 65.

self, call it his soul, or his mind, or his person, had vanished altogether out of existence. A philosopher may arrive at such an idea, but a man of ordinary understanding, though terrified by the aspect of death, would rather be inclined to believe that what he had known and loved and called his father or mother, must be somewhere, though no longer in the body.

We need not here inquire into the logical correctness of the argument on which a belief in the continuance of a personal existence is based. These questions belong to a much later time. All we have to do is to understand how natural the supposition was that there was such a continuance. It is perhaps too much to say that such a belief was universal; but it certainly was widely spread and is still very widely spread. In fact it constitutes a very large portion of religion and religious worship, and has been very fully examined of late by students of Natural Theology.

The Infinite behind Man.

If I call the recognition of an immortal element in man a perception of the infinite, I am well aware that I stretch the meaning of infinite beyond its usual limits. But I look in vain for another term equally comprehensive and less liable to ambiguity. The perception of something beyond the grasp of our senses, is always perception of something infinite, though in this case the infinite would have to be further defined as immortal.

Religious Ideas springing from it.

How religious ideas could spring from the perception of something infinite or immortal in our parents, grand-parents and ancestors, we can see even at the

present day. Among the Zulus, for instance, *Unkulunkulu* or *Ukulukulu*, which means the great-great-grandfather, has become the name of god. It is true that each family has its own *Unkulunkulu*, and that his name varies accordingly[1]. But there is also an *Unkulunkulu* of all men (*unkulunkulu wabantu bonke*), and he comes very near to being a father of all men. Here also we can watch a very natural process of reasoning. A son would look upon his father as his progenitor; he would remember his father's father, possibly his father's grandfather. But beyond that his own experience could hardly go, and therefore the father of his own great-grandfather, of whom he might have heard, but whom he had never seen, would naturally assume the character of a distant unknown being; and if the human mind ascended still further, it would almost by necessity be driven to a father of all fathers, that is, to a creator of mankind, if not of the world.

Animism.

It is difficult to find a proper name for this belief in and worship of our fathers. It has been called *Animism*, but this has proved so misleading a name that hardly any scholar now likes to employ it. In itself that name would not be objectionable, but unfortunately the same name has also been used for a totally different phase of religious thought, namely for the recognition of an active, living, or even personal element in trees, rivers, mountains, and other parts of nature. As the German expression *Naturbeseelung* was wrongly rendered in English by *Animism*, we have had two *Animism* to deal with,

[1] Callaway, *Unkulunkulu*, p. 103.

and there have not been wanting attempts to show that the two sprang from the same source.

Seelencult.

This is, of course, thoroughly misleading. The belief in and worship of ancestral spirits is called in German *Seelencult*[1], but, to make confusion worse confounded, *Animism* has been chosen by Lippert, the most powerful advocate of this theory, as a subdivision of *Seelencult*. Nay, worse still, from the idea, prevalent in some popular superstitions, that the soul of a deceased person may not only haunt his former abode, but may enter into anything that happens to be in the way, a stone or a shell or a log of wood, *Fetishism* has been identified with *Animism*, and has been defined as 'the capability of the soul to take possession of any thing whatsoever[2].' And as if this were not yet sufficiently chaotic, the ancient worship of nature-gods has been explained by one of these ancestral souls having been raised to the state of a fetish, and taking possession of heaven and earth, of sun, moon, and stars and all the rest. Thus, we are told, Jupiter himself was but a fetish, and a belief in him was due to fetishism, which was evolved from animism, which was a belief in our ancestors. If one considers what fetishism really is[3], namely the very last stage in the downward course of religion, this attempt to make a little-understood superstition of some modern Negro tribes the key to the religion of Greeks and

[1] J. Lippert, *Der Seelencult in seinen Beziehungen zur althebräischen Religion*, 1881; *Die Religionen der europäischen Culturvölker*, 1881; *Allgemeine Geschichte des Priesterthums*, 1883, 1884.

[2] Gruppe, p. 241.

[3] *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 54, 'Is Fetishism a Primitive Form of Religion?'

Romans, nay of most of the civilised nations of the world, is perfectly marvellous.

Of course a philosopher is at liberty to define his words as he pleases, and if any one chooses to call the belief in 'the capability of the soul to take possession of anything whatever' *fetishism*, or any other *ism*, he cannot easily be restrained. Only it should be clearly understood that the poor Negroes are not responsible for this confusion of language and thought, and that, if we continue to call a portion of their religion *fetishism*, that *fetishism* has hardly anything in common with the fetishism of modern philosophers.

Strange Names. Totemism.

There seems to be a peculiar fascination in strange names. They sound learned and mysterious, and seem to be above definition. Like fetishism, totemism has a perfectly legitimate and well understood meaning among the Red Indians. We shall have to treat of Totemism very fully when we come to treat of customs and their relation to religious ideas. But the real meaning of Totemism has been so much watered down that almost anything in the shape of a sign of recognition or emblem can now be baptised a totem. The British Lion has scarcely escaped being christened a totem, and the rose, shamrock, and thistle, particularly the last, stand in equal danger of losing their good name. And thus it has really come to pass that certain philosophers, after satisfying themselves that the human mind must everywhere pass through the stages of *animism* and *fetishism*, have landed us finally in *totemism*. Professor Gruppe tells us (p. 241) that if a sky-fetish or

a star-fetish becomes a *totem*, new ideas spring up in the human mind leading to a belief in 'sons of heaven,' or 'children of the sun;' so that in the end every religion, whether ancient or modern, not excluding Christianity, can be fully accounted for by Animism, Fetishism, and Totemism.

In order to secure clearness of thought and honesty of reasoning in the study of religion, I am afraid these three terms ought to be sent into exile. They have become dangerous, and if they are to be restored to their citizenship, it can only be on condition that they should be confined to their proper and accurately defined sphere, *Animism* as the name of a belief and worship of ancestral spirits; *Fetishism* as the name of a belief in chance objects being possessed of miraculous powers, common among certain Negro tribes; and *Totemism* as the name of a custom widely spread among Red Indians and other tribes, who have chosen some emblem as the token of their family or tribe, and who pay reverence to it or regard it even as their ancestor, whether human or superhuman.

If we keep these three terms properly defined and separate, it will be clear that it is from what we call *Animism*, from the wide-spread belief and worship of ancestors, that the simplest and most primitive ideas of immortality arose in the human heart. This imparts the highest importance to the second branch of our subject, the study of the infinite as perceived in man.

The Infinite in Man as a Subject.

The third and last manifestation behind which it was possible to discover something infinite, something unknown and yet real, was, what I call the Self, that is,

man himself, looked upon not objectively as another, but subjectively as the self. Little as we may suspect it, self-consciousness, or the consciousness of self, has given rise from the earliest times to as rich a mythology as the intuition of nature and the love of our parents and ancestors. That mythology has really survived longer than any other, for we still live in it and speak of spirit and soul and mind and intellect and genius and many smaller psychological deities as so many independent beings or powers or faculties, just as the Greeks spoke of their Zeus, Apollo, and Athene. But what our genius or our mind or our soul really is, what they are made of, what they are substantially, we know as little as the Greeks knew what Zeus, Apollo, and Athene were made of.

Psychological Deities.

We are quite willing to admit that there never was a Zeus or an Apollo or an Athene, and that these are but names for physical phenomena personified, or of the various activities of an unknown agent behind nature. But to be asked to admit that there is no such thing as spirit, mind, understanding, intellect or reason within us, and that all these are but names for certain activities of our subjective self, seems intolerable as yet, though thinkers brought up in the strict scholastic training of the middle ages, and independent thinkers also, such as Spinoza[1], for instance, never

[1] 'Mens certus et determinatus modus cogitandi est, adeoque suarum actionum non potest esse causa libera.' *Ethica*, ii. 48, *Demonstr.* 'Eodem hoc modo demonstratur in mente nullam dari facultatem absolutam intelligendi, cupiendi, amandi, etc. Unde sequitur, has et similes facultates vel prorsus fictitias vel nihil esse praeter entia metaphysica sive universalia, quae ex particularibus

hesitated on that point. But, even from a purely historical point of view, it is clear that by spirit was meant at first nothing but the air which is drawn in by our lungs, and given out again as breath. And as with the cessation of this breathing all bodily activity came to an end, *spiritus* came naturally to be used as a synonym for life, or rather it meant life, before there was this more abstract name of *life*. Again, as with the extinction of life, all mental activity also became extinguished, *spirit* came likewise to be used as a synonym for mental life. That mental life consisted, as we saw, in sensation [1], perception, conception, and naming, and in accordance with this, four agencies, if not agents, were imagined, called respectively sense, imagination, intellect, and language or logos.

Sense, Imagination, Intellect, Language.

With regard to sense, there was some excuse, because the organs of sense, the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue and the skin were actually there. But when the power of changing percepts into concepts was ascribed to the faculty of imagination, and the power of naming concepts to the faculty of language; when, lastly, the process of adding and subtracting concepts and names was ascribed to a new faculty, that of reason, there arose a whole Olympus of unseen deities. No doubt, as Ennius said, 'Look at that sublime light which all people invoke as Jupiter,' the

formare solemus. Adeo ut intellectus et voluntas ad hanc et illam ideam vel ad hanc et illam volitionem eodem modo sese habeant ac lapideitas ad hunc et illum lapidem, vel ut homo ad Petrum et Paulum.' *Eth.* ii. 48, *Schol.* See also Caird, *Spinoza*, p. 195.

[1] *Science of Thought*, p. 20.

believer in these mental deities also might say, 'Look at that sublime light within you which all people call Reason.' But as we have ceased to believe in Jupiter, we shall also have to surrender our belief in Reason, as an independent agency, or faculty, or power, and translate the old poetry of mythology into the sober prose of psychology.

We shall continue to reason all the same, though we do not profess to have Reason, just as we continue to be patient, though we do not possess a something called Patience. The change is not so violent as it seems. We mean much the same when we say, It rains, as what the Greeks meant when they said that Zeus rained; and we shall continue to reason just the same, though we no longer say that we are guided by reason or fall down to worship a goddess of Reason. The facts remain, only we conceive them more correctly.

Devatâs.

It may sound strange to call these faculties deities, but in India that name, devatâ, was actually used from a very early period, from the period of the Upanishads, and they formed from a very early time subjects, not indeed of adoration, but of meditation. This led to a philosophy which is contained in the Upanishads, treatises found at the end of the different Vedas, and therefore called Vedânta.

Âtma.

And in the same way as behind the various gods of nature, one supreme deity was at last discovered in India, the Brâhmans imagined that they perceived behind these different manifestations of feeling, thought, and will also, a supreme power which

they called Âtma, or self, and of which these intellectual powers or faculties were but the outward manifestations. This led to a philosophy which took the place of religion, and recognised in the self the only true being, the unborn and therefore immortal element in man. A step further led to the recognition of the original identity of the subjective Self in man and the objective Self in nature, and thus, from an Indian point of view, to a solution of all the riddles of the world. The first commandment of all philosophy, 'Know thyself,' became in the philosophy of the Upanishads, 'Know thy self as the Self,' or, if we translate it into religious language, 'Know that we live and move and have our being in God' (Acts xvii. 28).

Historically this Vedânta philosophy supplied the life-spring of the Buddhist religion in its philosophical aspect, and will therefore supply the last and perhaps the most important chapter in our study of Natural Theology.

Natural Religion.

We have thus surveyed the whole field of Natural Religion, and discovered the three great divisions into which it naturally falls. Nature, Man, and Self are the three great manifestations in which the infinite in some shape or other has been perceived, and every one of these perceptions has in its historical development contributed to what may be called religion.

Physical, Anthropological, Psychological Religion.

I shall distinguish these three divisions as *Physical Religion*, *Anthropological Religion*, and *Psychological Religion*, and, if my life is spared, I hope to make

these three the subject of my courses of lectures, illustrated by such evidence as language, myth, custom, and sacred literature supply. The subject, I know, is enormous, and I cannot promise you more than an outline, but such an outline, I hope, as may be filled by others who come after us, and whose knowledge, I have no doubt, will shed light on many a dark passage in the history of the human mind which we must leave but faintly illuminated by the information at present without our reach.

LECTURE VII.

RELIGION DIFFERENT FROM SCIENCE.

Religious Character.

WE have not finished yet with mapping out the plan of our work, and with defining the exact limits of what really constitutes religion. We have seen that nature, with its mountains, rivers, and trees, with its sky, sun, moon, dawn, and wind, can supply food for religious thought. We have seen that a belief in mankind as an unbroken chain leading from our own father to the great-great-grandfather of all men and all things, may likewise become a most powerful religious influence; and I have tried to explain how the study of our own nature with its various capacities may lead and has led to a philosophical religion based on a perception of our true self and its relation to the Universal Self.

But it is clear that every one of these vast domains of thought must be pervaded by a very peculiar spirit before it can rise to the level of what we mean by religion.

Religion and Science.

At the present time, for instance, we see that not only religion but science also deals with the infinite, or with much that lies beyond the horizon of our sensuous

perception. All inquiries into the causes of natural phenomena transcend that horizon. When science traces back our perception of sound and colour to vibrations of what is called ether, it deals with the finite and the infinite. All the so-called forces of heat, electricity, magnetism lie beyond the finite, and by their very nature can never come within the purview of finite sensuous perception. If the sun and moon and the stars can rouse within the heart of man religious emotions, they can also become the subject of minute scientific observation and calculation in the mind of the astronomer.

In ancient times, however, science had hardly as yet separated from religion, and, historically speaking, science seems everywhere to have taken its origin from religion. The first attempts at lifting the veil of nature and fathoming the causes of things were religious. The first astronomical observatories in the world were the towers attached to the temples in Babylon[1]. When the question was asked for the first time, whence came the rain, the lightning, and the thunder, the answer was that rain came from the rainer, Ζεὺς ὑέτιος, in Greece, from *Jupiter Pluvius* in Italy, from Indra or Parganya in India; lightning from the lightner, Ζεὺς κεραύνιος, τερπικέραυνος, *Jupiter fulgurator* and *fulminator*; and thunder from the thunderer, Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης, *Jupiter tonans.*

At a later time, when these answers seemed no longer satisfactory, new answers were attempted, and science explained lightning as a discharge of electricity, thunder as a tension of the air, rain as the condensation of vapour. What had to be explained

[1] Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, pp. 96, 156.

remained throughout the same; the difference arose from the new spirit of inquiry.

We must not forget, however, that even in our own scientific age prayers are still offered for rain, that is to say, that the religious view of nature has held its own, if not against, at least by the side of the scientific view. And this will help us to mark off the domain of religion from that of science. Both deal with that which lies behind or beyond our knowledge, but while science looks for causes of events, whatever these causes may be, religion is satisfied with admitting agents for actions, who assume different aspects according to the poetical genius of every race.

What imparts a Religious Character.

But we must restrict the sphere of religion, so far as it is founded on perceptions of the infinite, still further. The mere admission that there is an agent behind the rain, the lightning, the thunder, behind night and day, behind sun and moon, is not yet religion. It may be called mythology throughout, but in some cases it is not even that. If we say the wind blows, we hardly speak mythologically, though, no doubt, a very small addition of poetical imagination may change the wind into an Aeolus, or, as in modern illustrated books, into an angel with wings, blowing a visible puff of air out of his mouth. That would be mythology, but not yet religion.

In order to avoid all confusion of thought, we must reserve the adjective religious for those perceptions of the unknown or the infinite which influence man's actions and his whole moral nature. The mere reasoning, for instance, which would lead a sailor to

spread his sail so as to catch the wind blowing from the West, from the setting of the sun, would not yet constitute a religious act, even though the West-wind had been called *Zephyrus*[1], and become known as the son of *Eos* and *Astraeos*. We should have entered the domain of mythology, but not yet that of religion. But when in the Iliad (xxiii. 192) the funeral pile with the corpse of Patroklos on it, does not burn, and Achilles prays to the two winds, Boreas and Zephyros, and promises them beautiful offerings (ἱερὰ καλά) if they will come and kindle the flames, we shall then have to admit that we are at least on the threshold of religion, though as yet on the threshold only. For though sacrifices are generally considered as religious acts, they are sometimes mere customs which in the beginning had little or nothing of religion about them.

When, however, men begin to feel constrained to do what they do not like to do, or to abstain from what they would like to do, for the sake of some unknown powers which they have discovered behind the storm or the sky or the sun or the moon, then we are at last on religious ground.

Moral Influences of Physical Phenomena.

It has often been considered very strange that a mere perception of the powers of nature should have influenced the acts of men, or that even a belief in personal agents, as manifested in such phenomena as the rising and setting of the sun, the changes of day and night, of the seasons and of the year, or again in

[1] See M. M., 'Zephyros und Gâhusha,' in Techmer's *Internationale Zeitschrift für Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft*, 1 Band, 1 Heft, 1884.

storm and rain, in thunder and lightning, should have supplied motives for virtuous efforts.

I am far from maintaining that natural phenomena by themselves would have sufficed to call out moral sentiments, ideas of right and wrong in man. This is a subject that belongs to the student in ethics, and on which I do not at present mean to touch. Thus Dr. Martineau writes in his *Study of Religion*, i. 16: 'The enquiries on which we are now entering have been preceded by a treatment of ethical theory (in his work, *The Types of Ethical Theory*, 1885), the results of which will here be assumed as known. This order of exposition undoubtedly implies that I do not regard moral rules as depending upon prior religious belief; and that I do regard the consciousness of duty as an originating condition of religion.' Professor Flint also, in his works on *Theism* and *Antitheistic Theories*, regards ethics as quite independent of religion, though he admits the powerful influence which religion may exercise on morality. In his chapter on *Secularism* (p. 242) he goes so far as to say that morality which ignores religion is inherently weak because inherently self-contradictory. But when these sentiments had once been called forth, in however rudimentary a form, the contemplation of natural phenomena, whether in their unbroken order or in their violent disturbance, might well have reacted upon them and developed them in a new direction. It has often been said[1] that fear made the gods, but it is equally true to say that the gods, even in their purely physical character, made men fear. When man had once learnt to fear the gods of the sky in their terrible aspect, and to admire

[1] 'Primus in orbe deos fecit timor,' Statius, *Theb.* iii. 661.

them in their beneficent character, what was more natural than that this relation between man and the gods should call out the same feelings of fear and awe, but also of respect and gratitude, which a child feels towards his parents. If a child could implore his father to spare him, or thank his mother for acts of kindness, why should not man have implored the father of the sky to restrain the storm, or thanked the mother Earth for her kindly gifts?

It is sometimes supposed that it was peculiar to the Aryan nations only to interpret the signs and wonders of nature in a religious sense. But it seems to me that the same spirit pervades all the pages of the Old Testament. Every deluge was accepted as a punishment, and the bow in the cloud was interpreted as a token of a covenant between God and man. In the Psalms the anger of the Lord is constantly perceived in the great commotions of the sky and the earth. 'The earth shook and trembled, the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because He was wroth.'

It is quite true that not every natural phenomenon, nor every god, would evoke such feelings of fear and awe. Hermes and Hephaestos, Venus and Mars were not likely at first to react on the moral character of those who believed in them and celebrated their achievements. But the gods of thunder and lightning, the god of rain and sunshine, as soon as they had been recognised, could hardly help being addressed by supplicants to grant them their favour and their protection.

You know the old prayer of the Athenians[1]: ὗσον, ὗσον, ὦ φίλε Ζεῦ, κατὰ τῆς ἀρούρας τῶν Ἀθηναίων καὶ

[1] *Lect. S. L.* ii. 476.

τῶν πεδίων, 'Rain, rain, O dear Zeus, on the land of the Athenians and on the fields.'

Here we might translate Zeus by sky, but the vocative φίλε Ζεῦ, dear Zeus, at once brings in the personal element.

Vedic Prayers.

In the Veda also we can see how a poet first appeals to the mighty works achieved by Indra, the god of storm and thunder and lightning, and asks people to believe in him; and how he implores the same god not to hurt his children, because he believes in him.

'Look[1] at this great and mighty work,' he says, 'and believe in the power of Indra.'

And again:

'Do not hurt our nearest kin, O Indra, for we believe in thy great power.'

When the gods have thus been invoked as powerful beings, able to injure man, but also willing to protect him, a mutual relation between gods and men is soon established, and people profess to do what is right in order to please the gods, and to avoid evil in order to escape their anger.

Early Morality.

This is the earliest morality founded on a belief in physical deities. It may not be a very exalted morality; it is very much founded on the principle of *Do ut des*. But it contained germs which might grow and improve till men could say, as Fichte said, that all 'moral action flows from the love of God gently and quickly, as light flows from the sun.'

[1] *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 307.

Moral Influence of Ancestral Spirits.

That a belief in ancestral spirits might likewise influence human actions, requires hardly any proof. I believe it could be shown that the earliest ideas of right and wrong in a legal sense arose from that belief. It was the father who had laid down what should be done during his life-time, he being generally the stronger and the wiser man. And after his death, whenever doubts arose as to what was right and what was wrong to be done, an appeal to what the father had settled and laid down would often decide the question. Early law-books are very commonly ascribed to some distant ancestor, some Unkulunkulu, or, as in India, to Manu, the father of mankind, of whom it was said that 'whatever Manu declared, was medicine,' that is, was a remedy, and a prescription that ought to be followed by his children. Sir Henry Maine, in his work on *Ancient Law* (p. 125), has well explained how law was originally the parent's word, and how in Greece the so-called θεμίστες were the awards of judges, whether chiefs of families, of tribes, or of confederacies. They were not laws in our sense of the word, but *dooms*, decisions, and they were supposed to have a divine character and even a divine origin, because they were inspired by Justice, the daughter of Zeus, and only pronounced by the ancient judges. Sir Henry Maine has illustrated this first phase in the history of law by a comparison with Indian Law.

Ancestral Law in China.

Let me give you another illustration from China, taken from a recent work on *China*, its social, political and religious life, by M. Eug. Simon. M. Simon,

who has long lived in China, tells us that the whole social system in China is based on the Family Council and Tribunal.

The incidents of the Family Council, he writes, which assembles at stated periods, are roughly as follows:

'The Father and Mother appear in the family assembly, attended by their family. The names of the predecessors of the family are first recalled individually to the recollection of the family.

'Food is then presented to their memory as a token of duties performed by those present, in consequence of duties performed by those departed, and as a pledge for the conduct of those to come.

'The food, the result of a typical reward for duties performed, is then eaten, with portions laid aside for those in need.

'This is the first part. In the second, the father, seated between his wife and the eldest of the family, opens the Books of Record.

'These family books, which every Chinese family must keep, render unnecessary State interference or control, and are considered as legal documents.

'One contains matter relating to civil life, births, marriages, deaths, &c.; the others, the family judgments, records and biographies of the dead, their Wills, &c.

'The necessary records having been entered, the book containing historical record is opened, and the life and action of those departed commented on. The minds of all being steadied by such reflections, the meeting becomes a council, and balances its affairs, enquiring first into obligations outside the family, and then to those relating to the interior

management. The family would consider itself dishonoured were occasion given of right of demand for State or outside interference. Lastly, misdemeanours are enquired into: the accused is at once separated from others present, for trial, or, if information has to be obtained or proofs collected, he is remanded to the next or to a special meeting.

'Conceive the training in this method for every child. This is the paternal authority—an authority based only on judgment and method, and therefore acting with a power and a love that we cannot understand.

'Thus is to be seen the base of the union of administrative and judicial functions in the same hands.

'This method of judicial sifting of evidence before action, is to be universally found at the origin of all religion and government, and is the source of the method of knowledge, and only by such a process can the family protection exist and prosper.

'Confucius says of this method:

'"He who understands the ceremonies of the offerings to Heaven and Earth, and the *meaning* of the several offerings to ancestors, would find the government of a kingdom as easy as to look into the palm of his hand."'

A belief in ancestral spirits, therefore, may easily become the foundation of a system of morality, or, at all events, of law. With the Chinese, *Filial Piety* or reverence for parents and ancestors has been recognised from the earliest times as the root of all religion and government. The *Hsiâo King* or 'Classic of Filial Piety' is one of their most sacred books[1].

[1] See *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. iii.

Moral Influence of Psychological Deities.

Whether we can ascribe a similar moral influence to psychological religion also, is more difficult to say. It has certainly developed into some kind of religion in India, where meditation on the self within us and the recognition of its true relation to the Supreme Self forms to the present day the highest stage that can be reached by the faithful. In other countries that highest stage is generally divided from religion, properly so called, and handed over to the philosopher and the mystic. But apart from that, we often see isolated germs of psychological thought fall on religious and moral soil, and develop into mythology and even worship.

Temple to Mens.

In Rome, for instance, we read that about the time of the battle on Lake Thrasymene, or, according to others, one hundred years later, a temple was built to *Mens*, Mind, in order that the Roman citizens might always be of good mind[1]. There were other temples dedicated to *Pietas*, filial piety, *Pudicitia*, chastity, *Virtus*, manliness, *Spes*, hope, *Fides*, faithfulness. And not only were these deities worshipped in temples, but such were, for a time at least, their power and influence that Regulus would rather die than break his *fides* or his troth. At a later time, during the Second Punic War, Hannibal allowed ten Roman soldiers to proceed to Rome on their word of honour. Eight only returned, but the other two were declared infamous by the Roman Censors, and such was then still the power of public

[1] Ovid, *Fast.* vi. 241; Liv. xxii. 9 and 10; Cic. *N. D.* ii. 22; *Leg.* ii. 11; Hartung, *Religion der Römer*, ii. 262.

opinion that both are said to have committed suicide, because no one would treat them any longer as Roman citizens.

Eros and Psyche.

In Greece also some traces may be discovered of psychological mythology, if not of religion. The best known instance is that of Eros and Psyche, Love and Soul. In the form in which that legend is presented to us by Apuleius it is, no doubt, modern—nearly as modern in conception as on the frescoes of the Farnesina Palace. But it contains old elements—how old, it is difficult to say, considering how freely even men like Socrates still claimed the right of inventing or modifying a myth, if it helped to teach some philosophical lesson.

Conscience.

And even in our own language there are survivals of psychological mythology and morality. There is a well-known line quoted from Menander, *Monost.* 654:

Βροτοῖς ἅπασιν ἡ συνείδησις θεός,

'To all mortals conscience is a god.'

It is not difficult to understand what Menander (342–290 B. C.) really meant by this verse, but it is a curious verse for several reasons, and in particular because *συνείδησις* is not the common word for conscience in classical Greek, though it is the recognised term in the New Testament.

In classical Greek *συνείδησις* means consciousness rather than conscience, and the question we have to answer first is how such words as *σύνοιδα* and *συνείδησις*, from meaning to be conscious or cognisant, came to mean to be conscientious. The psychological process

seems to have been something like this. In primitive times a man might often do what seemed wrong to others, but not to himself. In that case, he himself would hardly remember what he had done. If asked, he would not be conscious of having, for instance, taken an apple from a garden, because he was in the habit of doing so, and saw no harm in it. If, however, he had once been told by others that he ought not to take an apple which belonged to some one else, or even if some unexplained instinct had told him that in taking it away he was doing what was disapproved by others or dangerous to himself, then he would be conscious of his act, and his consciousness of having done an act which by some authority or other had been judged to be wrong, would gradually become what we call a conscience.

Again, if two confederates had committed a criminal act, they would, if cross-examined, appear as *συνειδότες*, as knowing what they had done, and thus *συνειδώς* would assume the meaning of an accomplice. Even in our courts of law a man is said to look conscious, that is, guilty, and this conscious look would again be the outer manifestation of what we now call conscience. Thus conscience came to be a recognised name of what was originally a consciousness or a knowledge, however acquired, of what was right and wrong.

But this was not the only name by which this well-known state of feeling could be apprehended, and to say that, because there is in Sanskrit no word corresponding to conscience, therefore the Hindus did not know what conscience means, is absurd. Socrates did not use the word *συνείδησις*, but when he spoke of

the δαιμόνιον, the spirit within him, he meant the same thing, though he called it by a higher name, a name that comes very near to what the early Christians meant by the Holy Ghost.

In ancient languages, like Sanskrit, we must expect more primitive expressions for that inward state of consciousness of right and wrong.

In Sanskrit we find hrî, which means glow, blush, and shame[1]. This flushing or blushing was the outward sign of an inward commotion. A man being charged with a dishonourable act, blushed; that was quite the same as when in later times he had learnt to control the beating of his heart, and only looked conscious or foolish. A language therefore which has a name for blushing and shame has to all intents and purposes a name for conscience. A man who is said to blush at a thing, or at the very thought of a thing, may be said to be warned or kept by his conscience from doing a thing.

I doubt whether the German nations had a name like conscience before they came in contact with the Romans. As *conscientia* was a translation of συνείδησις, *Gewissen* seems a mere imitation of *conscientia*. In Gothic it is *midwissei*. But the German had the word *shame*, which, if it was derived from a root skam or kam, meaning to cover, expressed again the outward sign of conscience, the covering of the

[1] The Rev. W. Gill informs me that in Mangaia (Hervey Group) they say, *Kua renga koa*, 'You are yellow,' or more fully, *Kua renga koe i te akama*, 'You are yellow with shame.' The brownish complexion of the nation seems to turn more yellow, while with us the white complexion becomes suffused with red. To turn white or pale is with us a sign of fear rather than of shame. I have myself watched a native of India with a light brown complexion, turning ashy grey when convicted of having told an untruth.

face to hide the flush, or to avoid the searching look of the judge.

Remorse.

If there had been no word at all for conscience in Latin, an expression like that of Lucretius (iii. 839), *peccata remordent*, 'sins bite back,' would be sufficient to show that he at least knew what conscience meant. One such expression of a single poet may lead to an abundant growth of thought and language in the same direction. Thus, though *remorsus* is not a classical Latin word, it rises to the surface in mediaeval Latin, it becomes recognised as *remors* in French, as *remorse* in English. And as we find *conscientia* translated in German by *Gewissen*, and in Old English by *Inwyt*, we find remorse rendered literally in Old English by *Ayenbite*, that is, *againbite*, the two words together forming the title of one of the most important books of the fourteenth century, the *Ayenbite of Inwyt* by Dan Michel[1]. In German too we speak of *Gewissensbisse*, the bitings of conscience, that is, remorse.

In watching the growth of these names, which were all intended for one and the same state of mind, we can see how easily these acts of ours lead to the admission of a separate mental organ or faculty, or, as the Brahmans boldly called it, a deity.

Have we a Conscience?

Because I am conscious of having done what to me seems either right or wrong, I am supposed to possess a consciousness, or, as applied to moral questions, a conscience, which tells me what is right or wrong. But why should a man be supposed to possess such an organ

[1] Edited by Richard Morris, for the Early English Text Society, No. 23.

or faculty, or why should we appeal to a man's conscience, as something apart from the man? If a man is tall, he does not possess something called tallness. If he is hopeful, there is not inside him a power called hope; if he is ashamed, it is not something independent of him that makes him ashamed. Even his blushes are only the effect of the quicker movement of the heart, and what makes the heart move more quickly is the quick rushing in of perceptions and imaginations caused by circumstances which are stronger than himself. We are justified therefore in saying that we are conscious of having done wrong; but as soon as we go a step further and say that we have a conscience which tells us what is right or wrong, we go beyond the facts, such as we know them. Conscience never tells us what is right or wrong, but simply whether we have done what from some source or other we know to be right or wrong. Nothing is more common now than to call conscience an inward monitor, or even the voice of God[1]; to speak of conscience as the arbiter of right and wrong, nay, even as the source of all truth, and the highest witness of the existence of God[2]. But all this is philosophical mythology. If we possessed within us a faculty, or an oracle, or deity to tell us what is true, and what is right and wrong, how could Pascal have said that good and evil, truth and falsehood, differ with a few degrees of latitude? How could there be that infinite diversity of opinion as to what is true and what is right or wrong? We must learn that from other sources, and when we have learnt it from

[1] See Flint, *Theism*, p. 216.
[2] Goldwin Smith, in *Macmillan's Magazine*, Feb. 1878.

our teachers and by our own experience and judgment, then and then only do we become conscious of having done what is right or wrong. If we like to call that consciousness or that shame or that joy, conscience, we may do so, provided we remember that we use poetical and mythological language, and that such language, unless properly guarded, may exercise a powerful influence on our character, whether for evil or for good. That almighty conscience may be a god to all mortals, as Menander says, but it may likewise become a dumb idol[1].

Sacrifices an Element of Religion.

It may seem strange that in trying to make my own definition of religion as comprehensive as possible, I should nevertheless have left out what to many people seems an essential, to some the most essential element of religion, namely, sacrifice.

It cannot be denied that sacrifice has assumed considerable prominence in most religions. Cicero, as we saw, defined religion simply as *cultus deorum*; but it is a well-known fact that there were religions without sacrifices in ancient times, and that in modern times the most enlightened minds have completely freed themselves from all sacrificial obligations, in the usual sense of that word.

[1] This question has been powerfully argued by Professor Lorimer in his *Institutes of Law*, Second Edition, 1880, pp. 186 seq. 'I am glad,' he writes, 'that the doctrine of conscience is not taught, in this sense (as being an exceptional organ to decide what is right or wrong), by the present learned occupant of the Chair of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh.' It is, however, strongly held by the Professor of Divinity, Dr. Flint, who in his *Lectures on Theism* (p. 216) writes: 'It is not more certain that by the eye we see colours, and that by the ear we hear sounds, than that by conscience we discern good and evil.' See also an able pamphlet by Wayfarer, *What the Conscience is*, London, 1878.

Priesthood.

I go even further, and maintain that the priesthood also ought not to be considered as essential to religion, though it may be an inevitable outcome of it. The office of the priest, it should be remembered, is always vicarious, a fact which, with the increase of priestly power, may be forgotten in later times, but which is self-evident in the early periods of all religions. If we look on religion as originally the property of each individual soul, the priest would have no *locus standi* at all. Or if we trace religion back to the family, the father or head of the family is *ipso facto* the priest. When families grew into clans, and clans into tribes and confederacies, a necessity would arise of delegating to some heads of families the performance of duties which, from having been the spontaneous acts of individuals, had become the traditional acts of families and clans. The origin of a separate priesthood varies so much in different countries that it is almost impossible to speak about it in general terms. In some countries the office of the priest would remain united to that of the king; in others an individual of exceptional gifts as a poet and prophet would obtain for himself and his descendants the privileges of a spiritual ruler. These are questions concerning the history of different nations into which we cannot enter at present. What is important for us is to understand clearly that the first origin of religion,—and it is with this alone that we are dealing now,—does not necessitate, but on the contrary, does really exclude the admission of priests.

The same applies to sacrifices. What are called in later times sacrifices or sacred acts must all in their

beginning have been natural and spontaneous acts. We can easily trace back all prayers to the same feeling which would lead a child to ask for gifts from his father; and whoever understands the thoughts of a child in offering to his father a flower or a broken toy, whether from a feeling of gratitude or from a hope of further favours, will not look for any more remote motives prompting the offering of more or less valuable gifts to the gods, after such gods had once been conceived. Expiatory or purificatory offerings and sacrifices can be traced back to the same source, and have really nothing irrational in them, nothing that requires explanation, nothing with which we cannot fully sympathise ourselves.

But all these prayers and praises and offerings and purifications, even in their simplest form, always presuppose the belief in those superhuman or supernatural beings whom we have accustomed ourselves to call gods, and it would violate all rules of thought to place the sacrifice first, and the conception of a person to whom a sacrifice is offered, last.

Study of the Veda.

It seems to me that the study of the Veda is chiefly responsible for this delusion, that religion begins with sacrifice. At first it was the fashion to represent the hymns of the Rig-veda as the most primitive utterances of religious thought, recalling a period when there was as yet no system of religion, no creeds, no priesthood, no sacrifice. I remember myself speaking of the Rig-veda as the true theogony of the Aryan race, and I do not mean in the least to retract that statement. But it is one thing to say that the Veda brings us as near to the theogonic process of the

Aryan world as any literary document will ever bring us, and quite another to imagine that the Veda was composed by the first man who escaped from the glacial period, or by the first poet who could stammer forth human language. Why will people always imagine the impossible to be possible? However, it was but natural that after expectations had been raised to the highest pitch, there should be a reaction. The Veda, as I have always said, in spite of its wonderful antiquity, is like an oak in which we can count ring after ring, testifying to an infinite succession of intellectual springs and winters. Not only are priests and sacrifices presupposed in many a hymn, but most elaborate sacrifices performed by ever so many distinct priests are mentioned, at all events in the more modern hymns. Because it was clear that some of the hymns had been composed in connection with these sacrifices, it has of late become the fashion to maintain that all had been, that in fact the whole Vedic poetry was the product of a priestly caste, requiring song and poetry for the enlivenment of their sacrifices.

It is quite true that the hymns collected in what are called the Yagur and Sâma-veda, have no other object than to be employed at sacrifices. But it is equally true that the collection of the Rig-veda had no such sacrificial purpose. And, what is far more important is what every scholar knows, namely that even many of the passages taken from the Rig-veda and embodied in the two other purely sacrificial Vedas, are so turned and twisted in order to make them useful for liturgical purposes that no one could suppose for a moment that they were first composed for

liturgical, and afterwards collected for hymnological purposes. This idea, however, that, because some hymns were meant from the first to accompany the sacrifices, all Vedic hymns were the production of Vedic priests; that, in fact, the Hindus first elaborated a most complete and complicated ceremonial, and then only set to work to invent the gods to whom their sacrifices should be offered and to compose hymns of praise to celebrate the greatness of these gods,—this idea, I say, has so completely taken possession of certain philosophers, that they now appeal to the Veda as the best proof that sacrifice must everywhere have come first, and hymns to the gods, nay, according to some, even belief in the gods, afterwards. Gods, we are told, are not gods till they are worshipped (Gruppe, *l. c.*, p. 81). If such theories can be proved by facts in any part of the globe, let it be so; but to quote the Veda in support of them, is impossible.

And what applies to sacrifices offered to the gods of nature, applies with equal force to the offerings presented to ancestral spirits. We have been told of late that sacrifices arose really from carousals, and I do not deny that there is some truth in this, only that, as usual, it is spoiled by exaggeration. Nothing is more natural than that, after the death of a father, his place at dinner should be kept vacant, or that his share of food should actually be placed on the exact spot where he used to sit. That may seem childish, but it is perfectly human. Again, that a few drops of whatever served for drink at a meal should be poured on the ground in memory of the departed, is perfectly intelligible. But in that case, a belief in ancestral spirits was as necessary a

condition of such pious acts as a belief in gods is presupposed by sacrificial offerings.

What, however, quite staggers me, is the idea lately broached, that not only did all religion take its origin in these carousals[1], but that the first idea of sacrifice arose from some person persuading the people that by lighting in the morning the fire on the altar, they could assist the sun in his daily or yearly fight against his enemies. Where could they have got a belief in the sun as a fighter and as having enemies? And how would it have been possible to convince them, in spite of all evidence to the contrary, that the small rush-light on their hearth could invigorate the power of the sun? It is perfectly true that such ideas appear in the Veda, but they appear there preceded by many antecedent ideas, which make them not only less grotesque, but render them almost intelligible. But to imagine that such thoughts could be primitive, and that they could help us to account psychologically for the evolution of religious and sacrificial ideas in the world at large, is certainly to my mind passing strange. Well may the author of such a theory say that so absurd a thing could have happened once only in the history of the world, and that therefore all religions of the civilised races of mankind came from the country in which this strange hallucination took possession of one weak-minded individual (Gruppe, p. 277).

Although, therefore, a definition of religion which should exclude sacrifices and priesthood would certainly be deficient, I hold that both the sacrificial and

[1] 'Der Cultusact war nicht etwa nur mit einem Gelage verbunden, sondern er war recht eigentlich ein Gelage.' Gruppe, p. 277.

priestly character of religion is sufficiently secured by our restricting the perception of the infinite to such manifestations as are able to influence the moral character of man. It is the moral character of man that shows itself in those acts of fear, reverence, gratitude, love, and contrition which we comprehend under the general name of sacrifice, and the delegation of these sacrificial acts to agents, better qualified or more worthy to perform them than the rest, may likewise be traced back to a sense of humility on the part of the people at large, or what we now call the laity.

If now we gather up the threads of our argument, and endeavour to give our own definition of religion, it would be this:

'*Religion consists in the perception of the infinite under such manifestations as are able to influence the moral character of man.*'

I look upon this as a definition of *religion in its origin*, but if we once admit a continuity in the historical growth of religion, the same definition ought to remain applicable to all the later developments through which religion has passed. In order to remain applicable to all these later developments, our definition of religion must necessarily leave out whatever is peculiar to one or other of these later developments only; and it may happen therefore that what seem to some of us the most valuable characteristics of religion, are missing in our definition of it.

To those who maintain that religion is chiefly a *modus cognoscendi Deum*, a mode of knowing God, we should reply that there is no conceptual knowledge which is not based first of all on perceptual knowledge, and that *Deus* or God is not the only object of reli-

gion, that in fact so narrow a definition would exclude all dualistic and polytheistic religions as well as all those forms of faith which shrink from comprehending the Divine under the limits of mere human personality.

To those who cling to the idea of religion as chiefly a mode of worshipping God, *modus colendi Deum*, our answer would be that so long as worship is a genuine expression of moral sentiments, it is included in our definition; while when it has ceased to be so, it is no longer religion, but superstition only.

Kant's definition that 'religion consists in our recognising all our duties as divine commandments' is comprehended in our own, for that definition represents only a later and higher stage of that original perception of something unseen and infinite which determines our moral acts. Nay, if we go a step higher still, and recognise religion as the surrender of the finite will to the infinite, we have here again the fullest realisation of that primeval perception of the infinite as a power, not entirely different from ourselves, that makes for righteousness.

And while thus the highest conceptions of religion can be traced back as natural developments to that broad conception of religion on which our definition is based, we shall find that the lowest forms of religion likewise are easily comprehended under it. Roskoff, in his learned work *Das Religionswesen der rohesten Naturvölker*, 1880, (The religion of the rudest races,) which contains a most elaborate and exhaustive reply to Sir John Lubbock's theories, defines the religion of these uncivilised tribes in the most general terms as 'what lifts them above the real world.' Much the

same definition of religion is given by Hegel also. Here we have only to replace *real* by *finite*, and we shall see that what he means is exactly what we mean by a 'perception of something infinite beyond the finite world,' only that we qualify that perception of the infinite and restrict it to that class of perceptions which can influence the moral character of man.

I know in fact of no definition of religion—and I have dwelt in my lectures on the most important only—which cannot be accommodated within the wide boundaries of our own, and, what is even more important, I know of no religion, whether ancient or modern, that cannot be caught in that wide net. Even Buddhism—I mean Southern Buddhism, which refused to be caught by any other definition—cannot escape. Though Buddha declined to dogmatise on the Beyond, and though from his unwillingness to predicate anything about it, it dwindled down in the minds of some of his followers to a mere Nothing, yet even that Nothing was not the finite or material world, but lay beyond it, undefined, if not infinite. Buddha was lifted beyond the real world; and the practical side of Buddhism also, its belief in transmigration and the never-resting wheel of the world, presupposed a look that had pierced beyond the finite, nay, had raised the perception of the endless continuance of works or *Karma* into the most potent faith that could influence the moral character of man. 'We are what we are,' as Buddha says in the very first verse of his Dhammapada, 'by what we have thought and done. As the cart follows on the heels of the ox that draws it, so do our thoughts and deeds follow us.' The experience of this finite world could

not have taught him that lesson. It was a look backward and forward beyond the horizon of our experience—though not in his case, a look upward—that alone could have taught Buddha that faith in absolute justice and eternal right which has made his religion the wonder of the world.

LECTURE VIII.

THE HISTORICAL METHOD.

Criticism of My Definition.

THE definition of religion at which we arrived in our last lecture has received the support of a large number both of philosophers and historians; but for that very reason, it would seem, it has also provoked a great amount of very determined opposition.

Now we ought always to be truly grateful for adverse criticism. It generally gives us something, it teaches us something which we did not know before, whereas assent and laudation, though they may give us more confidence in our own opinions, add but seldom to our own or to the general stock of knowledge. After all, every one of us is only a labourer, each having his special work assigned to him in raising the temple of knowledge. It is of that temple alone that every honest workman ought to think, and not of himself, for he is but one in a million of hewers of wood and drawers of water. If he is planing and polishing his beam carelessly, or if he is spilling the water on the way, he should be thankful for his own sake, and still more for the sake of the great work which is entrusted to him, if his fellow-labourers will warn him, correct him, advise him, and help him in his work. Who knows now the workmen that built the pyramids, or even

the architect that devised them? But if one single block of granite had been placed at a wrong angle, the very pyramid would probably have collapsed long ago, or would have remained blemished for ever?

Pfleiderer's Criticism.

I feel truly grateful therefore for the criticisms which have been passed by Professor Pfleiderer and others on my former definition of religion, and I fully admit their justness. I had defined religion simply as 'a perception of the infinite,' without adding the restriction 'a perception of the infinite under such manifestations as are able to influence the moral character of man.' The fact was that in my former writings I was chiefly concerned with dogmatic religion. I was anxious to discover the origin of religious concepts, names, and theories, and I left the question of their influence on moral actions for further consideration. We cannot do or say everything at the same time, and it is perhaps hardly fair that we should be supposed to have negatived what we simply had left unmentioned. Still, I plead guilty to having not laid sufficient emphasis on the practical side of religion; I admit that mere theories about the infinite, unless they influence human conduct, have no right to the name of religion, and I have tried therefore to remedy that defect by restricting the name of religion to those perceptions of the infinite which are able to influence the moral character of man.

Professor Gruppe.

But a much more determined attack came from a different quarter. As I had meant to treat the Science of Religion in a strictly scientific spirit, I had care-

fully excluded all theories which ascribe the origin of religion either to innate ideas or to supernatural revelation. I had placed myself completely on what is called the positivist platform. 'We are told,' I said [1], 'that all knowledge, in order to be knowledge, must pass through two gates and two gates only, the gate of the senses, and the gate of reason. Religious knowledge also, whether true or false, must have passed through these two gates. At these two gates therefore we take our stand. Whatever claims to have entered in by any other gate, whether that gate be called primeval revelation or religious instinct, must be rejected as contraband of thought; and whatever claims to have entered in by the gate of reason, without having first passed through the gate of the senses, must equally be rejected, as without sufficient warrant, or ordered at least to go back to the first gate, in order to produce there its full credentials [2].'

Religion a Psychological Necessity?

Of course, if the psychological analysis of the earliest religious concepts as I had given it is correct, —and no one, I believe, has denied the simple facts on which it rests—it follows that religion is a psychological necessity, and not, as positivist philosophers maintain, a mere hallucination or a priestly fraud. This, I believe, is the real reason why my own explanation of religion, though admitted to be im-

[1] *Hibbert Lectures*, 226; Gruppe, p. 218.

[2] 'Das ist das berühmte Müller'sche System, welches eine besonders eingehende Würdigung erfordert, nicht allein wegen der persönlichen Bedeutung seines Urhebers, sondern mehr noch weil es der beredteste und systematischeste Ausdruck einer Auffassung ist, von welcher aus eine ganze Reihe hervorragender religionsgeschichtlicher Werke anderer Forscher geschrieben sind.' Gruppe, p. 220.

pregnable, has been so fiercely condemned by the positivists themselves. But it is one thing to condemn, another to refute. I should have thought that my critics would have welcomed my admission, *Nihil est in fide quod non antea fuerit in sensu*, with open arms. But no, they will hear of no psychological, of no historical explanation of one of the greatest psychological and historical facts in the world, namely religion. If anything, however, is absurd, it is surely to imagine that by shutting our eyes, we can annihilate facts. Is not religion as solid a fact as language, law, art, science, and all the rest? We may, if we like, disapprove of every one of these achievements of the human mind; but even then we cannot get rid of the problem as to how they came to exist. Unless, therefore, some intelligible arguments can be advanced against what I have put forward as the *conditio sine quâ non* of all religion, I shall for the present consider the following points as firmly established:—

1. That, like all other experience, our religious experience begins with the senses;

2. That though the senses seem to deliver to us finite experiences only, many, if not all, of them can be shown to involve something beyond the known, something unknown, something which I claim the liberty to call infinite;

3. That in this way the human mind was led to the recognition of undefined, infinite agents or agencies beyond, behind, and within our finite experience; and

4. That the feelings of fear, awe, reverence and love excited by the manifestations of some of these agents or powers began to react on the human mind,

and thus produced what we call Natural Religion in its lowest and simplest form,—fear, awe, reverence, and love of the gods[1].

History *v.* Theory.

After we have once established these premisses, there are two ways open for the study of Natural Religion. We may try to find out by means of abstract reasoning what ideas would naturally spring from these simple premisses, how the perception of the Infinite could be realised in language, and what could or could not be predicated of those undefined

[1] I doubt whether the writer of an interesting article in the *Scots Magazine*, Feb. 1889, can have attended all my lectures at Glasgow. He says that my definition of religion seemed to him to labour under four objections:

1. 'That it is not traced back to the *promiscuum* (read *proximum*) *genus*, just as much and just as little as the definition *modus cognoscendi*, etc.' But my definition traces religion back to one *proximum genus* only, and not to two. It traces it back to experience, and nothing else, not to both *cognoscere* and *colere*.

2. 'That it is expressed in terms which require definition.' I say no, unless I have laboured in vain in trying to show that the experience of the infinite is as palpable as that of the finite. The infinite in this its simplest and most primitive sense seems to me to require no further definition, nay to admit of none, whereas the concept of *Deus* is so full of historical ingredients that it almost defies definition.

3. He doubts 'whether my definition of religion, though it may include Buddhism, would include Fetishism.' Fetishism is, as I believe to have shown, the very last corruption of religion; but even in that corrupt form religion is based on the perception of something beyond the actual in the actual. And even if the fetish is coerced by blows instead of being importuned by prayers, the moral element is still present in the act of the worshipper.

4. My critic says 'that there are some religions which do not affect moral character, but only move the individual to the mechanical performance of certain external acts.' Yes, but these are again corruptions of religion, and perfectly intelligible in their downward movement. Would any one say that a Megatherion ought not to be defined as a living animal, because we know it in its petrified form only?

agents or agencies that had been discovered behind, or above, or within nature.

Theory.

It might be asked, for instance, whether the human mind could be satisfied with an indefinite number of such beings, or whether after a time the mere love of simplicity would lead on to the admission of one supreme being only.

Again, it might be asked whether anything beyond mere existence could be predicated of the infinite, or whether, after the existence of supernatural powers has been admitted and their number fixed, any further qualities could be ascribed to them.

We know that the answer, which was given, quite regardless as yet of historical facts, has been that it could be done in three ways, and in three ways only.

Causalitas.

First, these beings might be looked upon, not as identical with nature, but as behind nature; not as what is, but as the cause of what is; or, in the earliest stages of human thought and language, as makers, shapers, fathers, and rulers of the world. This is the conception of the divine *per viam causalitatis*.

Eminentia.

Secondly, as they were conceived as powerful and perfect, whatever qualities seemed most excellent in human nature, might be safely ascribed to them in a supreme degree. This is the conception of the divine *per viam eminentiae*.

Negatio.

Thirdly, whatever seemed imperfect in human nature, or at all events, weak and limited, could

safely be negatived of divine beings, *per viam negationis.*

Cosmological, Teleological, Ontological Arguments.

Again, the so-called proofs of the existence of divine beings or in the end of one Supreme God, the *Cosmological, Teleological,* and *Ontological,* might be examined and reasoned out, without any reference to the history of religious thought.

All this might be done, and has been done and well done, and I have little doubt that some of the lecturers on Lord Gifford's foundation will do full credit to this side of our subject, to what is generally called the *Philosophy of Religion.*

Historical Method.

I myself, however, am not going to follow this course, and this for various reasons. First of all, the philosophy of religion has such eminent representatives in Scotland, and more particularly in this University, that I should feel it presumptuous on my part to treat a subject which has been much better treated in this place than I could hope to do.

Secondly, all my own special studies have been devoted to the history of religion, and I can hardly be mistaken in supposing that it was for this reason that I was chosen to fill this lectureship.

Thirdly, I must openly confess that I have great faith in history, as showing to us, if not the best possible, at all events the only real arguments in support of the tenets of Natural Religion. To the philosopher the existence of God may seem to rest on a syllogism; in the eyes of the historian it rests on the whole evolution of human thought.

The opinions elaborated by the whole of mankind 'with all their fluctuations and contradictions,' seem to me to carry a certain weight, and, at all events, to convey more instruction than the systems of any single or even of all of our living philosophers.

Nor is it necessary that an historical study should exclude contemporary history. The philosophers of to-day will to-morrow be philosophers of yesterday, and if they have added anything original to the inherited stock of human knowledge, they will take their proper place in the historical Council of the world.

Whatever questions I have had to deal with, I have always found their historical treatment and solution the most satisfactory. If we do not understand a thing, if we hardly know what it is, what it means, and how to call it, it is always open to us to try to find out how it has come to be what it is. It is wonderful how this method clears our thoughts, and how it helps us to disentangle the most hopeless tangles which those who came before us have left to us as our inheritance. This historical method has regenerated the study of language, it has infused a new spirit into the study of ancient law; why should it not render the same kind of help to an independent study of religion?

Archaeology.

Nowhere, perhaps, can we see more clearly the different spirit in which these two schools, the *historical* and the *theoretical*, set to work than in what is called by preference the Science of Man, *Anthropology*; or the Science of People, *Ethnology*; or

more generally the science of old things, of the works of ancient men, *Archaeology*.

Theoretic School.

The *Theoretic School* begins, as usual, with an ideal conception of what man must have been in the beginning. According to some, he was the image of his Maker, a perfect being, but soon destined to fall to the level of ordinary humanity. According to others, he began as a savage, whatever that may mean, not much above the level of the beasts of the field, and then had to work his way up through successive stages, which are supposed to follow each other by a kind of inherent necessity. First comes the stage of the hunter and fisherman, then that of the breeder of cattle, the tiller of the soil, and lastly that of the founder of cities.

But while one school of anthropologists would thus derive civilisation by a gradual evolution from the lowest savagery, another school considers the savage as a stationary and quiescent being, so much so that it bids us recognise in the savage of to-day the unchanged representative of the primordial savage, and encourages us to study the original features of man in such survivals as the Bushmen, the Papuans and the Cherokees. These two views might seem contradictory, unless we distinguish between stationary savages and progressive savages, or define at least the meaning of the word, before we allow it to enter into our scientific currency.

Again, as man is defined as an animal which uses tools, we are told that, according to the various materials of which these tools were made, man must

by necessity have passed through what are called the three stages or ages of stone, bronze, and iron, raising himself by means of his more and more perfect tools to what we might call the age of steel and steam and electricity, in which for the present civilisation seems to culminate. Whatever discoveries are made by excavating the ruins of ancient cities, by opening tombs, by ransacking kitchen-middens, by exploring once more the flint-mines of prehistoric races, all must submit to the fundamental theory, and each specimen of bone or stone or bronze or iron must take the place drawn out for it within the lines and limits of an infallible system.

Historical School.

The *Historical School* takes the very opposite line. It begins with no theoretical expectations, with no logical necessities, but takes its spade and shovel to see what there is left of old things. It describes them, arranges them, classifies them, and thus hopes in the end to understand and to explain them. Thus when Schliemann began his work at Hissarlik, he dug away, noted the depth at which each relic was found, placed similar relics side by side, unconcerned whether iron comes before bronze, or bronze before flint. Here are the facts, he seems to say to the students of archaeology — now arrange them and draw your own conclusions from them.

Let me quote the words of a young and very careful archaeologist, Mr. Arthur Evans, in describing this kind of work, and the results which we obtain from it[1]:

'In the topmost stratum of Hissarlik,' he writes,

[1] *Academy*, December 29, 1883.

'(which some people like to call Troy,) extending six feet down, we find remains of the Roman and Macedonian Ilios, and the Aeolic colony; and the fragments of archaic Greek pottery discovered (hardly distinguishable from that of Spata and Mykenai) take us back already to the end of the first millennium before our era.

'Below this, one superposed above the other, lie the remains of no less than six successive prehistoric settlements, reaching down to over fifty feet below the surface of the hill. The formation of this vast superincumbent mass by artificial and natural causes must have taken a long series of centuries; and yet, when we come to examine the lowest deposits, the remains of the first and second cities, we are struck at once with the relatively high state of civilisation at which the inhabitants of this spot had already arrived.

'The food-remains show a people acquainted with agriculture and cattle-rearing, as well as with hunting and fishing. The use of bronze was known, though stone-implements continued to be used for certain purposes, and the bronze implements do not show any of the refined forms—notably the *fibulae*—characteristic of the later Bronze Age.

'Trade and commerce evidently were not wanting. *Articles de luxe* of gold, enamel, and ivory were already being imported from lands more directly under Babylonian and Egyptian influence, and jade-axeheads came by prehistoric trade routes from the Kuen-Lun, in China. The local potters were already acquainted with the use of the wheel, and the city-walls and temples of the Second City evince considerable progress in the art of building.'

Such is the method of the *Historical School*, and such the results which it obtains. It runs its shaft down from above; the *Theoretical School* runs its shaft up from below. It may be that they are both doing good work, but such is the strength of temperament and taste, even among scientific men, that you will rarely see the same person working in both mines; nay, that not seldom you hear the same disparaging remarks made by one party of the other, which you may be accustomed to hear from the promoters of rival gold mines in India or in the South of Africa.

Study of Language (Historical School).

Let us now cast a glance at the work which these two schools, the historical and the theoretical, have done in the study of language. The Historical School in trying to solve the problem of the origin and growth of language, takes language as it finds it. It takes the living languages in their various dialects, and traces each word back from century to century, until from the English, for instance, now spoken in the streets, we arrive at the Saxon of Alfred, the Old Saxon of the Continent, and the Gothic of Ulfilas, as spoken on the Danube in the fourth century. Even here we do not stop. For finding that Gothic is but a dialect of the great Teutonic stem of language, that Teutonic again is but a dialect of the great Aryan family of speech, we trace Teutonic and its collateral branches, Greek, Latin, Celtic, Slavonic, Persian, and Sanskrit, back to that Proto-Aryan form of speech which contained the seeds of all we now see before us developed

into germs, plants, flowers, and fruits in the various languages of the Aryan race.

After having settled this historical outline of the growth of our family of speech, the Aryan, we take any word, or a hundred, or a thousand words, and analyse them, or take them to pieces. That words can be taken to pieces, every grammar teaches us. The Sanskrit name for grammar is Vyâkaraṇa, which means 'taking to pieces.' This process, however, of taking them to pieces scientifically and correctly, dissecting limb from limb, is often as difficult and laborious as any anatomical preparation.

Acutus.

Well, let us take quite a modern word—the American *cute*, sharp. We all know that *cute* is only a shortening of *acute*, and that *acute* is the Latin *acutus*, sharp. In *acutus*, again, we easily recognise the frequent derivative *tus*, as in *cornutus*, horned, from *cornu*, horn. This leaves us *acu*, as in *acu-s*, a needle. In this word the *u* can again be separated, for we know that it is a very common derivative, in such words as *pec-u*, cattle, Sanskrit pasú, from PAS, to tether; or tanú, thin, Greek *ταν-ύ-ς*, Latin *tenu-i-s*, from TAN, to stretch. Thus we arrive in the end at AK, and here our analysis must stop, for if we were to divide AK into A and K, we should get, as even Plato knew (*Theaetetus*, 205), mere letters, and no longer significant sounds or syllables. Now what is this AK? We call it a root, which is, of course, a metaphor only. What we really mean by a root is the residuum of our analysis, and a residuum which itself resists all further analysis. But what is important is that these roots represent not a mere theoretic

postulate, but a fact, an historical fact, and, at the same time, an ultimate fact.

With these ultimate facts—that is, with a limited number of predicative syllables, to which every word in any of the Aryan languages can be traced back, or, as we may also express it, from which every word in these languages can be derived—the historical school of comparative philology is satisfied, at least to a certain extent; but it has also to account for certain pronouns and adverbs and prepositions, which are not derived from predicative, but from demonstrative roots, and which have supplied, at the same time, many of those derivative elements, like *tus* in *acu-tus*, which we generally call suffixes or terminations.

After this analysis is finished, the historical student has done his work. AK, he says, conveys the concept of sharp, sharpness, being sharp or pointed. How it came to do that we cannot tell, or, at least, we cannot find out by historical analysis. If we like to guess on the subject, Plato has shown us how to do it, and no one is likely to do it more ingeniously than he. But that it did convey that concept, we can prove by words derived from AK in Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, in Celtic, Slavonic, and Teutonic speech. For instance: Sanskrit âśu, quick (originally sharp), Greek ὠκύς, Lat. *oc-ior*, Lat. *ac-er*, eager, *acus*, *acuo*, *acies*, *acumen*; Greek ἀκμή, the highest point, A.-S. *ecg*; also to *egg* on; ἄκων, a javelin, *acidus*, sharp, bitter, *ague*, a sharp fever, *ear* of corn, Old High German *ahir*, Gothic *ahs*, Lat. *acus*, *aceris*, husk of grain, and many more.

Theoretic School.

Let us now look at the *Theoretical School* and its treatment of language. How could language arise?

it says; and it answers, Why, we see it every day. We have only to watch a child, and we shall see that a child utters certain sounds of pain and joy, and very soon after imitates the sounds which it hears. It says *Ah!* when it is surprised or pleased; it says *Bah!* when it sees a lamb, *Bow-wow!* when it sees a dog; and it soon says *See-saw*, when it swings its doll. Language, we are told, could not arise in any other way; so that involuntary interjections and imitations must be considered as the ultimate, or rather the primary facts of language, while their transition into real words is, we are assured, a mere question of time.

This theory, or rather these three theories, which have been called the *Pooh-pooh*, *Bow-wow*, and *Yo-heo* theories, are said to be easily confirmed by a number of words in all languages, which still exhibit most clearly the signs of such an origin; and still further, by the fact that these supposed rudiments of human speech exist, even at an earlier stage, in the development of animal life, namely, in the sounds uttered by dogs, parrots, and other animals; though, curiously enough, far more fully and frequently by our most distant ancestors, the birds, than by those who claim to be our nearest relatives, the apes.

It is not surprising, therefore, that all who believe in a possible transition from an ape to a man should gladly have embraced this theory of the origin of language.

The only misfortune is that such a theory, though it easily explains utterances which really require no explanation at all, such as *bow-wow* and *cuckoo*; *pooh-pooh* and *fie! yo-heo* and *see-saw*, or even words

such as crashing, cracking, creaking, crunching, scrunching, leaves us entirely in the lurch as soon as we come to deal with real words—I mean words expressive of general concepts, such as man, tree, name, law—in fact, nine-tenths of our dictionary.

The Theoretical School has certainly one great advantage. It goes to the very bottom of the question, and explains the very origin of language, as it took place in the nursery of the first Pithecanthropos or Anthropopithecos, and it explains it in so simple a way that every child can understand it. If a child can say Bow-wow, what difference is there between that and saying Dog? If a child can say Fie, why should it not say 'I disapprove'? If a child says Ding-dong, why should it not say Bell? All these, we are told, are differences of degree only, whatever that may mean, and with a sufficient allowance of time, there is nothing that will not become anything.

The Historical School cannot match such performances. When by a most laborious analysis it has reduced one language, or one family of languages, to its constituent elements, it cannot claim to have accounted for the origin of all language, but only of one or two or three families of human speech. When it has placed before us the roots of one language, or one family of languages, it has come to the end of its work. It can do no more than leave these roots as ultimate facts, though between these roots and the first friendly grunts that passed between anthropopithecos and pithecanthropos, there may be millions of millions of years.

Then why not adopt the Bow-wow, the Pooh-pooh, and the Yo-heo theories, which explain everything so

easily and so completely? For the simple reason that real language, when we trace it back to its real constituent elements, shows no trace whatever of these mere imitations of so-called natural sounds. They exist not as part and parcel of real language, but simply by the side of it. Even admitting the possibility that they might have grown into some kind of language, the fact remains that they have not done so[1]. What we call roots do not only show no outward similarity with these natural sounds,—that would be the smaller difficulty,—but they are totally different in nature; and this is the point which so few anthropologists seem able to see. These roots are not simply perceptual, like all *Bow-wow*, *Pooh-pooh*, and *Yo-heo* utterances; but they are conceptual in character, as the elements of conceptual language ought to be, if they are to help us to explain what has to be explained, namely, conceptual speech.

Brinton on Palaeolithic Language.

This has evidently been perceived by Dr. Brinton, now Professor of American Linguistics in the University of Pennsylvania. He knows that interjections and all the rest will not grow into real language. But he thinks that the American languages will help us to get behind the scene, and he has drawn up a picture of what, following their guidance, he imagines the language of Palaeolithic Man to have been[2]. 'It was far more rudimentary,' he writes, 'than any

[1] On the possibility of such a transition, see *Science of Thought*. pp. 309–315, a chapter for which I have been much blamed by scholars, while anthropologists have construed a limited concession into a complete surrender.

[2] *The Language of Palaeolithic Man*, by Daniel G. Brinton, M.D. Read before the American Philosophical Society, October 5, 1888.

language known to us. It had no grammatical form. So fluctuating were its phonetics, and so much depended on gesture, tone, and stress, that its words could not have been reduced to writing, nor arranged in alphabetic order.' To give an idea of what he supposes the phonetic chaos of that palaeolithic language to have been, he mentions that in the Araucanian of Chili the following letters are permutable. B may become W, W F, F U, U Ú, Ú I, I E, E G, G GH, GH Hu [1].

But that is not all. 'These palaeolithic words often signified logical contradictories, and which of the antithetic meanings was intended could be guessed only from the accent or a sign.' This will delight Dr. Abel. 'It possessed no prepositions nor conjunctions, no numerals, no pronouns of any kind, no forms to express singular and plural, male nor female, past nor present. The different vowel sounds and the different consonantal groups conveyed specific significance, and were of more import than the syllables which they formed.'

This last rather mysterious theory of vowels and consonants being more significant than the syllables which consist of them is illustrated by some remarks made by Bishop Faraud [2], on the Tinné or Athapascan language, spoken widely in British America, and closely allied to the Apache and Navaho dialects, spoken in the United States. Being, as we are told, a thorough master of Tinné, the Bishop states that its significant radicals are the five primitive vowels, A, E, I, O, U. Of these A expresses matter, E existence,

[1] Dr. Darapsky, *La Lengua Araucana*, Santiago de Chile, 1888, p. 15.
[2] *Dix-huit ans chez les Sauvages*, p. 85.

I force or energy, O existence doubtful, and U existence absent, non-existence, negation, or succession. These vowels are put in action by single or double consonants, which have more or less value in proportion as the vowel is more or less strong. Father Petitot[1] tells us that there are 'sixty-three consonants, divided into nine classes, each of which conveys a series of related or associated ideas in the native mind. Labials express the idea of time and space, as age, length, distance, and also whiteness—the last-mentioned, perhaps, through association with the white hair of age, or the endless snow-fields of their winter. The dentals express all that relates to force, &c. &c.'

Here I stop, and though I am afraid it will sound most audacious, I cannot help expressing my conviction that all this is simply wrong, and that language could never have been built up with such materials, as little as it was built up with interjections. I know this audacity will seem quite intolerable. My only excuse is that I could produce books published during the prehistoric times of Comparative Philology, in which English and other Aryan languages have been reduced as triumphantly to significant vowels and significant consonants.

The Historical School therefore leads us up to a certain point, up to where all is safe, but beyond which all is darkness, at least without the light of hypothetical illustration. It never pretends to prove that the roots which it leaves as ultimate facts were the primordial elements of human speech. It admits the possibility of aeons after aeons between the first man,

[1] Petitot, *Dictionnaire de la Langue Dénée Dindjié.*

fresh from the hands of nature, and the roots of the Aryan or Semitic family of speech. All it does is to venture on a guess. We found that nearly all the concepts expressed by these roots are significant of acts. Now as the great difficulty, which is hardly ever realised by anthropologists, consists in our having to account for the origin of concepts, and sounds expressive of concepts, and not merely of percepts, and sounds expressive of percepts, the suggestion first made by Noiré is that these roots were originally sounds uttered by men while performing certain acts in common. How little the real character of this theory has been understood is best shown by the fact that it has been actually mistaken for what is called the Yo-heoic theory. No doubt it is a suggestion, and no more, for who would dare to speak with positive certainty on matters so distant from us in time, and still more distant from us in thought? All we can say is that such a suggestion would fulfil three essential conditions; it would explain the simultaneous origin of concepts and roots; it would account for their intelligibility among fellow-workers, and it would explain what has to be explained, viz. conceptual, not perceptual language; language such as it is, not language such as it might have been. If any one has anything better to suggest, let him do so; if not, *his utere mecum.*

Advantages of both Theories.

I certainly do not wish to throw unmerited contempt on the Theoretical School. Far from it. We want the theorist quite as much as the historian. The one must check the other, nay, even help the other,

just as every government wants an opposition to keep it in order, or, I ought perhaps to say, to give it from time to time new life and vigour. I only wished to show, by an example or two, what is the real difference between these two schools, and what I meant when I said that, whether by temperament, or by education, or by conviction, I myself have always belonged to the Historical School.

Science of Religion.

If now we return to the Science of Religion, we shall find here again the same difference of treatment between the historian and the theorist.

The *theorist* begins by assuring us that all men were originally savages, or, to use a milder term, children. Therefore, if we wish to study the origin of religion, we must study children and savages.

Now at the present moment some savages in Africa, Australia, and elsewhere are supposed to be fetish-worshippers and nothing else. Therefore we are assured that five thousand or ten thousand years ago religion must have begun with a worship of fetishes —that is, of stones, and shells, and sticks, and other inanimate objects.

Again, children are very apt not only to beat their dolls, but even to punish a chair or a table, if they have hurt themselves against it. This shows that they ascribe life and personality—nay, something like human nature—to inanimate objects. Hence we are told that savages would naturally do the same, or have actually done the same from the earliest time to the present day. A savage is, in fact, the most obliging creature, for he does everything that any

anthropologist wishes him to do. But, even then, the question of all questions, *why* he does what he is supposed to do, is never asked. We are told that he worships a stone as his god, but how he came to possess the idea of God, and to predicate it of a stone, is called a metaphysical question of no interest to the student of anthropology—that is, of man. Nevertheless it is the primary question that is of interest, and the most vital interest to us.

If then we press for an answer to this all-important question, we are informed that *animism*, *personification*, and *anthropomorphism* are the three well-known agencies which fully account for the fact that the ancient inhabitants of India, Greece, and Italy believed that there was life in the rivers, the mountains, and the sky; that the sun, and the moon, and the dawn were cognisant of the deeds of men, and, finally, that Jupiter and Juno, Mars and Venus, were endowed with the form and the beauty, the feelings and passions of men . . . . We might as well be told that all animals are hungry, because they have an appetite.

We read in many of the most popular works of the day how, from the stage of fetishism, there was a natural and necessary progress to polytheism, monotheism, and atheism, and after these stages have been erected one above the other, all that remains is to fill each stage with illustrations taken from every race that ever had a religion, whether these races were ancient or modern, savage or civilised, genealogically related to each other, or perfect strangers.

Again, I must guard most decidedly against being supposed to wish to throw contempt or ridicule on this

school. Far from it. I differ from it; I have no taste for it; I think it is often very misleading. But to compare the thoughts and imaginations of savages and civilised races, of the ancient Egyptians, for instance, and the modern Hottentots, has its value, if carried out by real scholars. We learn as much by contrast as by comparison, and the bold adventures of the Theoretic School have often proved a useful warning at all events to later explorers.

Historical School.

Let us now see how the *Historical School* goes to work in treating of the origin and growth of religion. It begins by collecting all the evidence that is accessible, and classifies it. First of all, religions are divided into those that have sacred books, and those that have not. Secondly, the religions which can be studied in books of recognised or canonical authority, are arranged genealogically.

Semitic Religions.

The New Testament is traced back to the Old, the Koran to both the New and Old Testaments. This gives us one class of religions, the *Semitic*.

Aryan Religions.

Then, again, the sacred books of Buddhism and Gainism, of Zoroastrianism, and of Brâhmanism are classed together as Aryan, because they all draw their vital elements from one and the same Proto-Aryan source. This gives us a second class of religions, the *Aryan*.

Chinese Religions.

Outside the pale of the Semitic and Aryan re-

ligions, we have the two book-religions of China, the old national traditions collected by Confucius, and the moral and metaphysical system of Lao-zze. These two constitute a third class of Chinese religions.

The study of religions which have sacred books is in some respects easy, because we have in these books authoritative evidence on which our further reasonings and conclusions can be based. But, in other respects, the very existence of these books creates new difficulties, because, after all, religions do not live in books only, or even chiefly, but in human hearts; and when we have to deal with Vedas, and Avestas, and Tripiṭakas, Old and New Testaments, and Korans, we are often tempted into taking the book for the religion.

Still the study of book-religions, if we once have mastered their language, admits at all events of a critical and scholarlike study, while a study of native religions which have no books, no articles, no tests, no councils, no pope, withdraws itself almost entirely from a definitely scientific treatment. Any one who attempts to describe the religion of the ancient Greeks and Romans—I mean their real faith, not their mythology, their ceremonial, or their philosophy—knows the immense difficulty of such a task. And yet we have here a large literature, spread over many centuries, we know their language, we can even examine the ruins of their temples.

Religions without Books.

Think after that, how infinitely greater must be the difficulty of forming a right conception, say, of

the religion of the Red Indians, the Africans, the Australians. Their religions are probably as old as their languages, that is, as old as our own language; but we know nothing of their antecedents, nothing except the mere surface of to-day, and that immense surface explored in a few isolated spots only, here and there, and often by men utterly incapable of understanding the language and the thoughts of the people. The mistakes committed by students of these savage religions would fill volumes, as has been shown by Roskoff in his answer to Sir John Lubbock[1]. And yet we are asked to believe by the followers of the *Theoretic School* that this mere surface detritus is in reality the granite that underlies all the religions of the ancient world, more primitive than the Old Testament, more intelligible than the Veda, more instructive than the mythological language of Greece and Rome. It may be so. The religious map of the world may show as violent convulsions as the geological map of the earth, and what is now on the surface may belong to the lowest azoic rocks. But this would have to be proved, and cannot be simply taken for granted. What I have ventured to say on several occasions to the enthusiastic believers in this contorted evolution of religious thought is, let us wait till we know a little more of Hottentots and Papuans; let us wait till we know at least their language, for otherwise we may go hopelessly wrong.

The Historical School, in the meantime, is carrying on its more modest work by publishing and translating the ancient records of the great religions of

[1] See Roskoff, *Das Religionswesen der rohesten Naturvölker*, 1880.

the world, undisturbed by the sneers of those who do not find in the Sacred Books of the East what they, in their ignorance, expected. They can hardly be aware of what is thought of their daintiness. Would geologists turn up their noses at a kitchen-midden, because it did not contain their own favourite lolly-pops? And yet that is what some students of ancient religion seem inclined to do, when the ancient *Ṛishis* of the Veda are not as complacent as the primeval savages, and do not think exactly what synthetic philosophers think they ought to have thought.

Where there are no sacred texts to edit and to translate, the true disciples of the Historical School—men such as, for instance, Castrén in Finland, Bishop Caldwell or Dr. Hahn in South Africa, Horatio Hale or Dr. Brinton in North America—do not shrink from the drudgery of learning the dialects spoken by savage tribes, gaining their confidence, and gathering at last from their lips some records of their popular traditions, their ceremonial customs, some prayers, it may be, and some confession of their ancient faith. But even with all these materials at his disposal, the historical student never forgets that these communications on religious subjects gathered from the lips even of a Cetwayo, can hardly be more trustworthy than a description of the doctrines of Christianity, gathered by the same Cetwayo during his stay in England from the lips of a London coal-heaver. He does not rush at once to the conclusion that in the Legends of the Eskimos any more than in the hymns of the Vedic Âryas, he can find the solution of all the riddles in the science of religion. He only says that we are not likely to find any evidence much

more trustworthy, and that therefore we are justified in deriving certain lessons from these materials.

And what is the chief lesson to be learnt from all these materials? It is this, that they contain certain words and concepts and imaginations which are as yet inexplicable, which seem simply irrational, and require for their full explanation antecedents which are lost to us; but that they contain also many words and concepts and imaginations which are perfectly intelligible, which presuppose no antecedents, and which, whatever their date may be, may be called primary in that sense.

However strange it may seem to us, if we simply follow the evidence placed before us, there can be little doubt that the perception of the Unknown or the Infinite was with many races as ancient as the perception of the Known or the Finite, that the two were, in fact, inseparable. To men who lived on an island, the ocean was the Unknown, the Infinite, and became in the end their God. To men who lived in valleys, the rivers that fed them and whose sources were unapproachable, the mountains that protected them, and whose crests were inaccessible, the sky that overshadowed them, and whose power and beauty were incomprehensible, these were their unknown beings, their infinite beings, their bright and kind beings, what some of them called their *Devas*, the Bright, the same word which, after passing through many changes, still breathes in our own word, *Divinity*.

This unconscious process of theogony is historically attested, is intelligible, requires no antecedents, and may in that sense be called a primary process. How

old it is, chronologically, who would venture to ask or to tell? All that the *Historical School* ventures to assert is that it explains one side of the origin of religion, namely, the gradual process of naming or conceiving the Infinite. While the *Theoretic School* takes the predicate of God, when applied to a fetish, as requiring no explanation, the *Historical School* sees in it the problem of all problems, the result of a long-continued evolution of thought, beginning with the vague consciousness of something invisible, unknown, and unlimited, which gradually assumes a more and more definite shape through similes, names, myths, and legends, till at last it is divested again of all names, and lives within us as the invisible, inconceivable, unnameable—the infinite God.

Even if it should be possible to discover traces of fetishism in really ancient documents, in Egyptian and Babylonian inscriptions, in Chinese legends, or in Vedic hymns, an accurate student of the historical growth of religious ideas would always ask for its antecedents. Fetishism, from its very nature, cannot be primitive, because it always presupposes the previous growth of the divine predicate. As to the fetishism of modern negroes, we know now that it represents the very lowest stage which religion can reach, whether in Africa or any other part of the world, and I know of no case, even among the most degraded of Negro tribes, where remnants of a higher religious belief have not been discovered by the side of this degraded belief in amulets, talismans, and fetishes. The idea of De Brosses and his followers, that fetishism could reveal to us the very *primordia* of religious thought, will remain for ever one of the

strangest cases of self-delusion, and one of the boldest anachronisms committed by students of the history of religion.

I need hardly say that though in the science of religion as in the science of language, all my sympathies are with the Historical School, I do not mean to deny that the Theoretical School has likewise done some good work. The very opposition roused by such men as Schelling and Hegel has been of immense assistance. Let both schools work on, carefully and honestly, and who knows but that their ways, which seem so divergent at present, may meet in the end.

LECTURE IX.

HISTORICAL TREATMENT OF RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS.

Is Religion Possible?

IT has often been said, What can be the good of an historical study of religious questions? We do not want to know what Manu, or Buddha, or Socrates, or Christ thought about the questions which trouble us. We want to know whether any living man can give us an answer that will satisfy the requirements of our own age, or prescribe a remedy which will cure the complaints of our own society. The burning question of the day is not what religion has been, or how it came to be what it is. The real question is the possibility of any religion at all, whether natural or supernatural; and if that question has once been answered in the negative, as it has been by some of the most popular philosophers of our century, why not let the dead bury the dead?

The fact that, as far as history can reach, no single human being has ever, from his childhood to his old age, been without something that may be called religion, would carry very little weight. The limitation, 'as far as history can reach,' would at once be construed into a confession of our ignorance, so long as there remained a single nook or corner on earth that had not been explored by anthro-

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our dictionary.

I do not
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great philosophers of our age
We could learn nothing from
before us, or even from those
us. My own experience has been,
that nothing helps us so much to
value our own religion as a study

Essays, ii. 228; *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte von*
p. 41.

of the religions of other nations, and that nothing enables us better to deal with the burning questions of to-day than a knowledge of the difficulties inherent in all religions. These questions which are placed before us as the burning questions of the day, have been burning for centuries. Under slightly varying aspects they belong to the oldest questions of the world, and they occupy a very prominent place in every history of religion. If there is continuity anywhere, it is to be found in the growth of religious opinions.

History and Theory inseparable.

Even our modern philosophers and theologians are what they are, and think what they think, because they stand on the historical accumulation of the religious thoughts and religious theories of former ages; and the religious thoughts and religious theories of former ages were in their time of exactly the same kind as the thoughts of our present philosophers. And not till our young philosophers have learnt that lesson, not till they will consent to serve a humble apprenticeship under the guidance of those who came before them, is there any hope of a healthy development in our modern philosophy. If there is evolution everywhere, is there to be no evolution in philosophy alone?

Agnosticism.

Let us examine a few of the more important of our so-called burning questions of the day, in order to see what kind of help we may expect to derive from history in trying to answer them. We are told that Agnosticism is an invention of our own age, and that,

pologists. In other cases, again, where the existence of a religion cannot be denied, the religion of the child would be explained as an hereditary taint, that of the old man as mere dotage or second childhood. The fact again that, so long as we know anything of the different races of mankind, we find them always in possession of something that may be called religion,—a fact which may now be readily granted,—and that out of the sum total of human beings now living on this earth (that number varies from 1400 to 1500 millions[1]—if you can realise such a sum or even such a difference) those who are ignorant and those who deny the existence of any supernatural beings form a mere vanishing quantity, would make no impression whatever on those who consider that the very word supernatural has no right to exist and should be expunged in our dictionary.

I do not wish to prejudge any of these questions; and in choosing for my own task a careful study of the historical development of religious thought among the principal nations of the world, I claim for it at first no more than that it may serve at least as a useful preparation for a final solution of the difficult problems which the great philosophers of our age have placed before us. It would be strange indeed if in religion alone we could learn nothing from those who have come before us, or even from those who differ from us. My own experience has been, on the contrary, that nothing helps us so much to understand and to value our own religion as a study

[1] M. M. *Selected Essays*, ii. 228; *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte von Chantepie de la Saussaye*, p. 41.

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if it is once accepted, there must be an end of all that is called religion. This shows at all events a considerable agnosticism of the history of philosophy.

When a poet of the Veda (VII. 86, 2), though fully believing in Varuṇa, utters his complaint that he does not know how to get near him or into him, what is that but the most simple and primitive expression for the modern phrase, How can we know the Unknowable?

Modern *Agnosticism* has been defined as the profession of an incapacity to discover the indispensable conditions of either positive or negative knowledge [1]. In that sense, Agnosticism simply represents the old Academic ἐποχή, the suspense of judgment, so strongly recommended by all philosophers [2], and so rarely observed by any one of them, not excluding the Agnostics. When the word is applied in a more special sense, namely as expressing man's inability to assert either the existence or the non-existence of God, there was the old Greek word *Agnoia* which would have avoided the ambiguity of the word *Agnosticism*. For *Agnosticism* seems at first sight merely the opposite of *Gnosticism*, and it has to be carefully explained that it has nothing to do with *Gnosticism*, in the usual sense of that word, not even as its negation. And even if we are told

[1] Huxley, *Hume*, i. 60.

[2] Cic. *De Nat. Deor.* i. 1, 'De qua (religione) tam variae sunt doctissimorum sententiae, ut magno argumento esse debeat, caussam, id est principium philosophiae, esse inscientiam, prudenterque Academicos a rebus incertis assensionem cohibuisse. Quid est enim temeritate turpius? aut quid tam temerarium tamque indignum sapientis gravitate atque constantia, quam aut falsum sentire, aut, quod non satis explorate perceptum sit et cognitum, sine ulla dubitatione defendere?'

that the name Agnostic was really derived, not from Gnosticism, but from ἄγνωστος, the unknown God, whose altar at Athens is mentioned by St. Paul [1], this would not make Agnosticism a better name, for Agnosticism is supposed neither to deny nor to assert the existence of a god, while a god who has an altar is a very real god, although he may be said to be unknowable by men.

Plutarch, in his treatise on Superstition, calls what we mean by Agnosticism, *Agnoia* or *Amathia*, and he states that it generally branches off in two directions, leading either to atheism (ἀθεότης) or to superstition (δεισιδαιμονία) [2].

Agnosticism, therefore, is at all events not a modern invention, and if we want an answer to it, we may find it in the words of one who has frequently been counted not only as an agnostic, but even as an atheist. This is what Goethe says:

'The brightest happiness of a thoughtful man is to have fathomed what is fathomable, and silently to adore the unfathomable.'

'Das schönste Glück des denkenden Menschen ist:

[1] On Fimbul-ty, the unknown god among Celts, see *Hibbert Lectures* by John Rhys, p. 613. In the Babylonian psalms we constantly meet with expressions such as: 'To the god that is known and that is unknown; to the goddess that is known and that is unknown, do I lift up my prayer.' See *Hibbert Lectures* by Sayce, pp. 217, 304, 349. In Egypt we meet with unnamed gods and goddesses and such invocations as 'Oh, all ye gods and goddesses who are unnamed, let a child remain in my place for ever and ever, keeping alive the name of my house.' Le Page Renouf, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 141.

[2] Plut. *De Superstitione*, i. 1, Τῆς περὶ θεῶν ἁμαθίας καὶ ἀγνοίας εὐθὺς ἐξ ἀρχῆς δίχα ῥυείσης, τὸ μὲν, ὥσπερ ἐν χωρίοις σκληροῖς, τοῖς ἀντιτύποις ἤθεσι τὴν ἀθεότητα, τὸ δὲ, ὥσπερ ἐν ὑγροῖς, τοῖς ἀπαλοῖς, τὴν δεισιδαιμονίαν ἐμπεποίηκεν.

das Erforschliche erforscht zu haben und das Unerforschliche ruhig zu verehren.'

Epicurean view of the Gods.

Another phase of thought which seems equally modern, namely the theory that there *may* be gods or supernatural powers, but that nature, when once started, is governed by her own laws, and men left to their own fate, was one of the best discussed problems of the Epicureans both in Greece and in Rome. The verses which Cicero ascribes to Ennius are well known:

'I have always said and shall say that a race of heavenly gods exists, but I hold that they do not care what the human race may do; for if they did, it would go well with the good and bad with the bad—which is not so[1].'

Chance and Purpose. Darwin.

This Epicurean concept of deity is very prevalent at the present time among what may be called the right wing of the Darwinians. Darwin, as is well known, retained the idea of a Creator, but he did not claim for Him more than that He created a few original forms, which were left to self-development into other and needful forms. He saw in the actual world, not the realisation of an ever-present Divine Thought and Will, but the result of what he called Natural Selection, Survival of the Fittest, and all the rest. Whether there is any difference be-

[1] Cic. *De Div.* ii. 50:
Ego deûm genus esse semper dixi et dicam coelitum,
Sed eos non curare opinor, quid agat hominum genus;
Nam si curent, bene bonis sit, malis male, quod nunc abest.

tween the old war of all against all and the survival of the fittest and strongest, or again, between chance and natural selection, depends on a definition of terms, and no term requires so careful a definition as 'natural selection,' unless, like the Duke of Argyll, we condemn it altogether as self-contradictory. For in ordinary parlance selection requires one who selects, and if nature can select, then we have certainly a right to ask whether we may spell this selecting or discriminating Nature with a capital N. But at all events the question between chance or purpose in the Universe has been argued before by men not inferior to ourselves, and the difficulties inherent in a belief in listless gods have been discussed so fully that the experience then gained should not be ignored in reopening that old question.

Here also Goethe's words deserve at least as much attention as the saying of Epicurus or Lucretius. 'God,' he writes, 'did not rest after the six days of work; on the contrary, he continues to work as on the first day.'

Atheism.

That atheism also is not an invention of yesterday is generally admitted, though it seems hardly known at how early a date of the history of religion it comes in. In the Vedic hymns we can still watch the Aryan theogony, the very transition of natural phenomena into natural gods. But even there doubts spring up, and the ancient poets suddenly ask themselves whether after all there are such beings as the *Devas*. In a well-known hymn of the Rig-veda a poet expresses his doubts whether Indra, the chief god of the Vedic Indians, really exists.

The same doubt as to the real existence of such gods as Indra, that had grown into impossible beings by the accumulation of all kinds of misunderstood legends about them, occurs again and again in Indian literature. But we must remember that to doubt or to deny the existence of Indra or of Jupiter is not Atheism, but should be distinguished by a separate name, namely *Adevism*. The early Christians were called ἄθεοι, because they did not believe as the Greeks believed nor as the Jews believed. Spinoza was called an atheist, because his concept of God was wider than that of Jehovah; the Reformers were called atheists, because they would not deify the mother of Christ nor worship the Saints. This is not Atheism in the true sense of the word, and if an historical study of religion had taught us that one lesson only, that those who do not believe in our God are not therefore to be called Atheists, it would have done some real good, and extinguished the fires of many an *auto da fe*.

Intuitive knowledge of Gods.

And if another school of modern philosophers, baffled in their search for unconditioned knowledge, takes refuge in intuition as the true foundation of religious knowledge, this idea too is foreshadowed in the Vedic hymns. In a hymn addressed to Varuṇa[1], the poet begins with a confession that he has neglected the works of Varuṇa, that he has offended against his laws. He craves his pardon; he appeals in self-defence to the weakness of human nature; he deprecates death as the reward of sin

[1] *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 295.

'My thoughts,' he says (I. 25, 16), 'move onwards towards thee, as cows move to their pasture.' And then he exclaims suddenly, 'Did I see him who is seen by all? Did I see his chariot on the earth? Yes, he has heard these my prayers.'

In another hymn (VIII. 10), where the poet had first expressed his doubts whether the great god Indra existed at all, because it was said that no one had ever seen him, he immediately introduces Indra himself [1], saying, 'Here I am, O worshipper! behold me here. In strength I overcome all creatures.'

Here we have intuition of the divine in its most primitive form. That idea, however, develops and becomes very prominent in the later theological and philosophical literature of India. As in the Old Testament, the poet in the Veda too, the *Ri*shi, was interpreted as a seer, not as a maker. His poems were called God-given [2]; or the gods were called the friends and helpers of the poets.

Philosophical treatment.

In later philosophical systems the question is most fully discussed, whether we ought or ought not to admit an intuition as a kind of perception, by the side of ordinary sensuous perceptions.

A few extracts from the Sâṅkhya-sûtras, one of the six recognised systems of Hindu philosophy, will show you how small the world of thought really is, and how exactly the same difficulties which trouble us, have troubled the minds of the gymnosophists on the banks of the Ganges. Kapila, the supposed author of the Sâṅkhya-philosophy, admits three kinds

[1] *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 309.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 141.

of evidence, and no more. These are called[1] pratyaksha, sensuous perception, anumâna, inference, and sabda, the word, particularly the sacred word or the Veda. You see therefore that this philosophy, though it is suspected of being atheistic, tries to appear orthodox. It begins by defining perception or the evidence of the senses, by the following aphorism (I. 90): 'Perception is the discernment which portrays the form of that with which it is being brought into contact.'

The author then proceeds to defend his definition of sensuous perception against those who object that it is not wide enough, because it does not include the perceptions of the Yogins, the people who by means of fasting and other kinds of penance bring themselves to have ecstatic visions.

Kapila rejoins that these perceptions of the Yogins are not perceptions of things outside them with which their senses can be brought into contact. And if it should be said that these Yogins, in their state of exaltation, might have perceptions arising from contact with hidden or invisible things or things which exist as past and future, though not as present[2], his own definition would then be wide enough to comprehend them.

After this, Kapila proceeds to meet another objection. The critics of his definition of sensuous perception seem to have pointed out to him that his definition was not wide enough to include the ecstatic visions having Îsvara, the Lord, for their object.

[1] Sâṅkhya-sûtras, I. 3; cf. R. Garbe, *Die Theorie der indischen Rationalisten*, 1888.

[2] Yoga-sûtras, III. 16.

Some Yogins must have pretended to have had such visions by means of something like sensuous perception (Yoga-sûtras, II. 44–45). But Kapila declines to entertain these objections or to modify his definition accordingly, because, as he says, the existence of such a Lord has never been established (Sâṅkhya-sûtras, I. 92). From his own point of view the concept of an Îsvara or Lord, as defined by the Yogins, would be self-contradictory (I. 95), and, as he points out in a subsequent chapter (V. 10), would not be established by sensuous evidence, by induction, or by revelation[1].

He does not deny thereby the existence of a Lord, but only of such a Lord as the Yogins assert, namely, a being that can be reached by sensuous contact and perceived by ecstatic vision[2].

Vision in the Bhagavadgîtâ.

How prevalent a belief in such ecstatic visions of a deity became in the religious philosophy of the Indian people, we see from the famous episode in the Bhagavadgîtâ, where *Krishna* appears in his true nature before the eyes of *Arguna*.

Arguna said[3] to *Krishna*: 'I have heard from you about the production and dissolution of things, and also about this your inexhaustible greatness. O highest

[1] The commentator says, Îsvare tâvat pratyaksham nâstîtyanumânasabdâv eva pramâne vaktavye, te *ka* na sambhavata ity arthaḥ. This shows that my interpretation of Sûtra I. 92 was right, not that of Ballantyne and Cowell, who suppose that Kapila refers to the perceptions possessed by Îsvara.

[2] Ballantyne translates, that any Lord exists is not proved, but Kapila restricts his remark to the Îsvara of the Yoga-philosophy, and the commentator warns us against taking this as a general denial of the existence of a Lord. See also Yoga-sûtras, I. 23 seq.; and *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, vii. 304.

[3] Bhagavadgîtâ, translated by Telang, *S. B. E.* viii. 92. I have abbreviated the extract and tried to make it more intelligible.

Lord, I wish now to see your divine form. If, O Lord, you think that it is possible for me to look upon it, then, O Lord of the possessors of mystic powers, show your inexhaustible form to me.'

The Deity said: 'In hundreds and in thousands see my forms, various, divine; see wonders in numbers unseen before. Within my body see to-day the whole universe. But you will not be able to see me with merely this eye of yours. I give you an eye divine.'

Having spoken thus the great Lord showed his supreme divine form. If in the heavens, the lustre of a thousand suns burst forth all at once, that would be like the lustre of that mighty one.

Then Arguna said: 'O God, I see within your body the gods, as also all the groups of various beings; and the lord Brahman seated on his lotus seat, and all the sages and religious snakes. I see you who are of countless forms, possessed of many arms, chests, mouths, and eyes on all sides. And, O Lord of the universe! O you of all forms! I do not see your end or middle or beginning. I see you bearing a coronet and a mace and a discus,—a mass of glory, brilliant on all sides, difficult to look at, having on all sides the effulgence of a blazing fire of sun, and indefinable. . . . I believe you to be the eternal Being. I see you . . . having the sun and moon for eyes, having a mouth like a blazing fire, and heating the universe with your radiance. The space between heaven and earth and all the quarters are pervaded by you alone. Looking at this wonderful and terrible form of yours the three worlds are affrighted.'

In Sanskrit all this sounds very grand, and when the vision is over, *Krishna* assumes again his own human form. 'I cannot be seen,' he says, 'in this form by any one but you, even by the help of the study of the Vedas or of sacrifices, nor by gifts, nor by actions, nor by fierce penances. Be not alarmed, be not perplexed, at seeing this form of mine, fearful like this. Free from fear and with delightful heart, see now again that same form of mine.'

The visions of Santa Theresa and of even more modern saints are so like the earlier visions of Indian heroes that we cannot be far wrong in ascribing both to the same source and treating them both with the same indulgence.

Revelation.

In close connection with this question, the possibility of an intuitive knowledge of God, another question also, that of the possibility of a revelation, of a communication of divine or absolute truth to man,—a question so hotly discussed at present,—meets us again and again in our wanderings through the history of religion. In the Veda the inspiring influence of the gods is simply taken for granted. The gods are said to have roused and sharpened the mind of the poets [1], and in the end the gods themselves were called seers and poets. As soon as the Vedic religion became systematised, and had to be defended against the doubts of friends and foes, the Brâhmans elaborated an apologetic philosophy which seems to me unsurpassed in subtlety and acuteness by any other defence of a divinely inspired book. The whole of the Veda was represented as divine in

[1] *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 141; Rv. VI. 47, 10; I. 31, 1.

its origin, and therefore beyond the reach of doubt. It was not to be looked on as the work of men, but only as seen by inspired poets. It was supposed to date from all eternity, and to be so prehistoric in character that when unfortunately the names of real kings and real cities occurred in some of the Vedic hymns, as they do, they had to be explained away as meaning something quite different.

Historical traces in the Veda.

We find, for instance, in the Rig-veda III. 53, 14, the following verse:

Kím te krinvanti Kîkaṭeshu gâvaḥ, ná âsíram duhré ná tapanti gharmám,
Â naḥ bhara Prámagandasya védaḥ, Naikasâkhám maghavan randhaya naḥ.

This means:

What are thy cows doing among the Kîkaṭas? They yield no milk, they heat no kettle;
Bring us the wealth of Pramaganda, subdue, O Maghavan, Naikasâkha!

These Kîkaṭas are evidently a tribe which did not worship Indra and which Indra is asked to subdue. The name does not occur again in the Rig-veda, but it is said to have been the old name of Magadha or Behar on the Ganges, the future birthplace of Buddhism. According to others the northern part of Behar was properly called Magadha, while the southern portion only was called Kîkaṭa[1]. Whatever they were, they must have been a real race, Pramaganda must have been a real king, and Naikasâkha, even if it meant originally, as Ludwig thinks, of low birth, must have referred to some real historical character. But all this is denied by orthodox theologians. If

[1] J. Bird, *Historical Researches*, p. 2.

it were so, they say, the Veda would not be nitya, eternal, or as we say, prehistoric. 'It has been said,' they argue, 'that the Veda has not a divine, but a human origin, and that in the same way as the Mahâbhârata was composed by Vyâsa, the Râmâyana by Valmîki, the Raghuvamsa by Kalidâsa, so the Kâthaka, Kauthuma, and Taittirîyaka, which are portions of the Veda, were composed by Katha, Kuthuma, and Tittiri. And even if these names were only meant to signify that the families of Katha, Kuthuma, and Tittiri were in traditionary possession of these portions of the Veda, yet the fact that historical and real persons are mentioned in the Veda would by itself be sufficient to prove that the Veda cannot be considered as prehistoric. Now there are passages, like: "Babara, the descendant of Pravahana wished;" "Kusurubindu, the descendant of Uddâlaka wished," etc. The Veda therefore must have had a beginning like all other existing things.' So far the opponent who denies the eternity of the Veda.

All this, however, is stoutly denied by Gaimini, the representative of the most orthodox philosophy in India. 'The Veda,' he says, 'was the word before the beginning; it existed before all other words, such as Katha, Kuthuma, Tittiri, etc., so that titles of certain parts of the Veda, such as Kâthaka, Kauthuma, Taittirîyaka, etc. contain merely the names of those who handed down the Veda by tradition. As to such names as Babara, the son of Pravahana, they must not be taken as the names of historical persons; but Babara is really another name of Vâyu, the wind, who makes a sound like babara, and whose nature it

is to drive things forward, hence called pravahana (*provehere*). In the same manner all other historical and geographical names should be explained, etymologically, not historically.'

This is only a small specimen of what forensic theology can achieve, and could achieve long before our own time. It enables us to see both what was originally intended by such words as *God-given*, *God-inspired*, Sruti, what has been heard, *Revelation*, what has been unfolded, and what was made of these words afterwards. It was the sense of an over-powering truth which led to the admission of a revelation. But while in the beginning truth made revelation, it soon came to pass that revelation was supposed to make truth. When we see this happening in every part of the world, when we can watch the psychological process which leads in the most natural way to a belief in supernatural inspiration, it will hardly be said that an historical study of religion may be useful to the antiquarian, but cannot help us to solve the burning questions of the day. But this is not what I am pleading for at present. At present I want to prove no more than that an historical study of the religions of the world possesses this one great advantage, that it familiarises us with the old problems of the philosophy of religion, and fits us for a more fearless treatment of them in their modern form.

The old Problems in their simpler Form.

And by showing us the various phases through which many of these problems have passed before they assumed their present form, it teaches us another and most important lesson, namely, that in attempting to solve these problems we must not attempt to solve

them in their modern form only, and with all the perplexities which they present to us in their often obscure metaphysical phraseology, but that we must trace them back, as far as we can, to their first beginnings and to their simplest form.

It is with these religious problems as it is with the problems of language. Who could account for language, if he only knew the language of to-day? If we knew none of the antecedents of English, as it now exists in its 250,000 words, many of them with different meanings, many of them again having one and the same meaning, even the wisest of us could say no more than what Plato said in the Cratylus, namely that language could not possibly have been invented by man[1]. And now that we know by what simple process language was, if not invented, at all events produced and elaborated by man, does it lower language, because it was not invented by the gods, or does it lower man because he was not presented by the gods with a language ready made? I believe not, and I hold the same with regard to religion. If we see with what natural feelings and simple sentiments religion began, and then follow its course till it reaches that perfect, or at all events that complete state in which we find it in later times, we shall hardly think that we degrade religion by accepting it as the most precious product of the human mind, nor shall we consider man as robbed of his dignity, be-

[1] Rousseau makes the same confession. 'Quant à moi,' he writes, 'effrayé des difficultés qui se multiplient, et convaincu de l'impossibilité presque démontrée que les langues aient pu naître et s'établir par des moyens purement humains, je laisse à qui voudra d'entreprendre la discussion de ce difficile problème.' See De Bonald, *Recherches Philosophiques*, p. 117.

cause on the day of his birth the gods did not descend from heaven to present him with a religion ready made or reduced to settled creeds and finished articles of faith, but left him to grow and to learn to stand on his own legs, and to fight his own battle in the struggle for truth.

LECTURE X.

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RELIGIOUS PROBLEMS.

The Problem of Creation.

WHEN we study the same problem, first in the heated controversies of our own time, and then look at it from a more elevated position which allows us to watch its historical progress, in all its varying aspects, it seems often difficult to believe that the problem is really the same. And yet, if history teaches us anything, it teaches us that there is continuity in the growth of thought as in the growth of language.

Let us look at the problem of creation. The question which the Vedic poet asked (X. 31, 7) when he said, 'What was the forest, what was the tree from which they hewed heaven and earth,' is in reality the same question which we ask to-day, and which has received ever so many answers from century to century, and will receive as many more, so long as heaven and earth remain. It is true these early questioners would hardly understand our language, if we tried to put them off with the nebular theories of Kant and Laplace, with Lyall's explanation of the formation of the crust of the earth, or with Huxley's account of the transition of inorganic into organic protoplasm. But

what they were in search of was after all the same, and what they called *wood*, out of which heaven and earth were hewn, was but another name for ὕλη, wood, *materies*, wood, then material and matter, something behind or antecedent to the phenomenal world, as it appears before our eyes.

The Logic of Facts.

It is sometimes quite startling, after we have tried to unravel the subtle webs of philosophy, such as the so-called *Cosmological*, *Ontological*, and *Teleological* proofs of the existence of a supreme deity, to have to face the question, what the earliest searchers after God would have said to these arguments. They would hardly have comprehended the language in which they present themselves now, and if we tried ourselves to translate them, for instance, into Vedic Sanskrit, we should completely fail. And yet we are the descendants of those Vedic poets, their language is essentially our language, their thoughts are essentially our thoughts, the world we live in is much the same as their Aryan home, and whatever discoveries have been made in other branches of knowledge, no new facts have been discovered since their time to help us to solve that old and yet always new question, whether there is an author of the Universe, whether there is a Creator and a God.

That the three famous arguments, the *Cosmological*, the *Ontological*, and the *Teleological*, have collapsed before the tribunal of formal logic, may be admitted. But it has been truly said[1] that 'as an analysis of the unconscious or implicit logic of religion, as tracing

[1] Caird, *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 133.

the steps of the process by which the human spirit rises to the knowledge of God, and finds therein the fulfilment of its own highest nature, these proofs possess great value.' We must not imagine that belief in God is founded on a subtle syllogism. Besides the logic of the philosopher, there is a *logic of facts*, or a *logic of history*, and where can we find these facts, and where can we find the steps of that process by which the human mind rose gradually and irresistibly to the knowledge of God, if not in the history of religions?

Cosmological Argument.

The cosmological argument, or the argument *a contingentiâ mundi*, may be summed up in the language of the nineteenth century in the following words: 'The human mind[1] rises from the perception of the transitory, contingent, finite character of the world to the notion of an absolutely necessary or infinite Being.'

It is clear that language like this would be as much beyond the comprehension of an Aryan savage as it is beyond the comprehension of a child in the nursery, and, as a matter of fact, even of the majority of mankind, at the present day.

Aryan Savages.

But we must reckon in all these questions with those very Aryan savages. They began the work which we are continuing, and there has been no break between them and ourselves, for the chain of language, that is, of thought, is perfect in all its links from Sanskrit to English. From the very annals of

[1] Caird, *l. c.* p. 153.

language it has been possible to put together some kind of picture of the earliest period of Aryan life. And even in that earliest period we find names for a *Heaven-father*, for *bright* and *heavenly beings*, nay, even, if you remember, for *faith*.

But for that very reason this period of Aryan language and thought has been rejected as quite modern, and a very different picture of the true Aryan savage has been painted for us by Professor Huxley. In his 'Struggle for Existence: a Programme,' he tells us: 'In the cycle of phenomena presented by the life of man, the animal, no more moral end is discernible than in that presented by the lives of the wolf and of the deer. However imperfect the relics of prehistoric man may be, the evidence which they afford clearly tends to the conclusion that for thousands and thousands of years, before the origin of the oldest known civilisations, men were savages of a very low type. They strove with their enemies and their competitors; they preyed upon things weaker or less cunning than themselves; they were born, multiplied without stint, and died, for thousands of generations, alongside the mammoth, the urus, the lion, and the hyena, whose lives were spent in the same way; and they were no more to be praised or blamed, on moral grounds, than their less erect and more hairy compatriots. As among these, so among primitive men, the weakest and stupidest went to the wall, while the toughest and shrewdest, those who were best fitted to cope with their circumstances, but not the best in any other sense, survived. Life was a continual free fight, and beyond the limited and temporary relations of the family, the Hobbesian war of each against all

was the normal state of existence. The human species, like others, plashed and floundered amid the general stream of evolution, keeping its head above water as it best might, and thinking neither of whence or whither.'

Though this graphic picture of the state of mankind thousands of generations ago rests chiefly on inductive imagination, I am quite willing to accept it. The greater the savagery, the dulness, the stupidity with which *Homo sapiens* began, the greater the marvel at what must have been from the first, though undeveloped, in him, and made him in the end what we find him to be in the men of light and leading of our own age. For whether he asked his Whence or Whither, while browsing as yet on the lichens of glacial fields with his less erect compatriots, the mammoth, the urus, the lion, and the hyena, or whether that question was first asked during a post-glacial period, certain it is that he alone asked it, and that he alone tried to answer it in the end by what we call the cosmological argument.

Why?

That very question may be illogical, and every attempt to answer it still more illogical. But why will people not see that the mere fact of such a question being asked, and being asked at a time when as yet there was no Bible, no creed, no dogma, is something that ought to make us reflect. Why did man alone among all his hairy compatriots ask that question Whence? Why was he surprised, when no one else was? Why was he not satisfied with the fulness of life and enjoyment like his fellow-creatures,

the mammoth, the urus, the lion, and the hyena? Can we ever imagine a mammoth saying to himself, Who is my father? Who was my grandfather, my great-grandfather, my great-great-grandfather, the father of all fathers, our Father in heaven? Can we imagine even the most favoured specimen of the so-called Pithecanthropos, the ape-man, uttering the question, Whence comes this world? Yet in the earliest relics of ancient thought, in the hymns of the Rig-veda, that question is asked. I cannot enter here on the question how far the hymns of the Rig-veda are modern or ancient. Let them be as modern as you like, yet to the historian they represent the earliest human thought within his reach. In that Rig-veda then, and I am quite willing to admit in a hymn which, compared with others, strikes me as decidedly more modern, the poet asks:

'Who knows the secret? who proclaimed it here, Whence, whence this manifold creation sprang?'

That it sprang from somewhere, or, as we should say, that it was contingent on something non-contingent, is taken for granted. There is as yet no cosmological argument. But yet the question is there, and to my mind that question is far more important than all its answers. It is in that question, in the power of asking that question, that the true nerve of the cosmological argument lies. Man is so made that he cannot be satisfied with mere perceptions, but must proceed to ask whence they come. Philosophers may tell us that it is a very foolish and illogical question to ask; but it is not the fault of the nightingale that it sings, nor is it the fault of man that he asks Whence? There is no power on earth to

stop that question, not even the power of logic. The answers themselves, as I said before, are far less important, but they are interesting nevertheless as showing us the historical development of the human mind when brought face to face with that Whence?

Answers to the Cosmological Question.

Every kind of answer, more or less childish to our mind, was given to that question in India, in China, in Palestine, and in Greece; and, what is important, some of the earliest answers did not suggest creation by a personal creator, but something very like what is now called evolution. In India, as in Greece, water was at first guessed to have been the beginning of all things, then fire and heat and every kind of element, but not yet a creator. Sometimes fire is placed first, as by Heraclitus, afterwards water, and then the earth, and the wind[1]. We see here again that what is often supposed to be a very modern, is in reality a very ancient theory of the origin of the world, the theory of emanation, closely connected with the theory of evolution.

Emanation.

We can study it in its appearance and reappearance from century to century.

In the hymns of the Rig-veda the two ideas of an uncreated and self-developing world, and of a creator or a maker, run side by side.

We find the first traces of a maker or creator in the Vedic deity, called Tvashtar, the carpenter, τέκτων, then the maker, who is described as a clever workman (apasâm apastamaḥ X. 53, 9), having good

[1] *Heraclitii Reliquiae*, ed. Bywater, xxi.

hands (supâṇi III. 54, 12, sugabhasti VI. 49, 9); and even as a smith, forging the thunder-bolt for Indra (I. 32, 2). But he is also the maker of the world and of all creatures in it. Thus we read, Rv. III. 55, 19:

Devas tvashṭâ savitâ viśvarûpaḥ
Puposha prajâḥ purudhâ jajâna,
Imâ ca viśvâ bhuvanâni asya,

'The god Tvashṭar, the enlivener, endowed with many forms, has nourished the creatures and produced them in many ways; all these worlds are his.'

And again, Vâj. Saṃh. XXIX. 9:

Tvashṭâ idam viśvam bhuvanam jajâna,

'Tvashṭar has begotten this whole world.'

Another god who is often put prominently forward as the maker of the world is Viśvakarman, literally the All-maker, who is afterwards called Prajâpati, lord of creatures (Śat. Br. VIII. 2, 1, 10). Of him we read, Rv. X. 81, 2:

'What was the stand on which he rested, how was it and where, from whence the all-seeing Viśvakarman, creating the earth, disclosed the sky by his power?'

'The god who has eyes on every side, and a face on every side, and arms on every side, and feet on every side, when he creates heaven and earth, being alone, he forges them with his arms and with wings (used as bellows)[1].'

'What was the wood, what was the tree whence they fashioned heaven and earth[2]? Search, O sages,

[1] Muir, iv. 5.

[2] See also Rv. X. 31, 7, where the same line occurs followed by another, 'the two, heaven and earth, stand together and do not grow old for ever; but days and dawns have waxed old.'

in your mind for that on which he stood when establishing the worlds.'

Soon, however, the thought appears that all these questions are of no avail, and that no one can discover the secret of creation. Thus the poet of this very hymn finishes by saying:

'You will not know him who produced these worlds; something else is within you; the chanters of hymns move about enveloped in mist, talking vaguely and enjoying life.'

Emanation or Srishti.

There is, however, a second stream of ideas which likewise comes to the surface in the Veda. The world is spoken of as having been originally water without light (salilam apraketam), and very soon water is mentioned as the beginning of all things. But in this very same hymn (X. 129), the poet admits that no one knows, and no one can declare whence this creation sprang. The gods even came after it, and he who is called the seer in the highest heaven, even he may know, or he may not know.

The very word which we generally translate by creation teaches us a lesson. It is vis*r*ishti, and comes from a root s*rig*, which means simply to let out, so that vis*r*ishti comes much nearer to emanation or even evolution than to creation.

The idea that water was the beginning of the world became soon very popular. It is said in the Rig-veda 'the waters contained a germ from which everything else sprang forth' (Rv. X. 82, 5–6; X. 121, 7).

Golden Egg.

In the Brâhmanas we find it plainly stated that this (universe) was in the beginning water, 'Âpo ha vâ idam agre salilam âsa.' From the water arose a golden egg, which floated about for a year. Then a male arose and this was Pragâpati, the lord of creatures. He divided the golden egg and floated about in it for another year. He then spoke those words, bhûr, bhuvah and svar, and by them he created the earth, the firmament, and the sky. This golden egg too became a very favourite topic. Thus we read in the *Khândogya*-Upanishad III. 19[1]: 'In the beginning this was not. It became, it grew. I turned into an egg. The egg lay for the time of a year. It broke open. The two halves were one of silver, the other of gold.

'The silver one became this earth, the golden one the sky, the thick membrane (of the white) the mountains, the thin membrane (of the yoke) the mist with the clouds, the small veins the rivers, the fluid the sea.

'And what was born from it was the sun. When he was born shouts of hurrah arose, and all beings arose, and all things which they desired. Therefore whenever the sun rises and sets, shouts of hurrah arise, and all beings arise, and all things which they desire.'

The idea of the world beginning as an egg is so natural that we cannot be surprised when we meet with it again and again in different parts of the world where historical communication seems out of the

[1] This is paraphrased in Manu I. 9–13.

question. We read in the famous Finnish epic, the Kalevala[1]:

'From the lower half of the egg
Shall arise the roof of the earth,
From the upper half of the egg
The high heaven shall arise.
The white that is in the egg
Shall shine bright in the sky;
The yellow that is in the egg
Shall beam softly as moon in the sky;
From the other parts of the egg
Stars may come in the sky.'

Some scholars suppose that the Fins borrowed this idea from their Slavonic neighbours, especially the Lituanians, but Castrén accepts it as of Finnish origin.

If we turn to Egypt, we find that there also the sun is represented as an egg[2]. Râ, the sun-god, is invoked: 'O Râ, in thine egg, radiant in thy disk, shining forth from the horizon, swimming over the steel firmament—thou who producest the winds by the flames of thy mouth, and who enlightenest the world with thy splendours, save the departed,' etc.

In the Orphic mythology the mundane egg is frequently mentioned, but from what sources the Orphic poets took their ideas is as yet very doubtful.

The Brâhma*n*as are overflowing with similar speculations, all mere guesses at truth, it is true, but all flowing from the same conviction that the phenomenal world is not the real world, or, at all events, that behind what we see and know there is something which we do not see and which we do not know, that there is something real behind the contingent. In the beginning, the Brâhma*n*as say, there was the real, the sat, that

[1] Castrén, *Finnische Mythologie*, p. 289; Kellgren, *Mythus de ovo mundano*, Helsingforsiae, 1849.

[2] Le Page Renouf, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 190.

which truly is, and from it came all that now is or seems to be. Here we see the root of the cosmological argument; and the whole history of religious thought, thus running in that self-made channel, seems to me stronger than any elaborate argument. It may be quite true, as Kant holds, that the category of causality is applicable to the deliverances of the senses only, and that therefore we cannot logically prove the existence of an extra-mundane cause. But if the human mind has once formed the concept of phenomena and of a phenomenal world, that very word and concept implies the admission of something non-phenomenal, or noumenal, whatever we may call it. If there were no phenomena at all, if the world had not been seen through and found out to be transparent, then the case would be different, and Kant would be right in his demolition of the cosmological argument; but so long as we speak of the phenomenal, as Kant does himself, we speak at the same time of the non-phenomenal. It is this non-phenomenal, or trans-phenomenal, which the cosmological argument postulates, and has postulated through all ages; and it is this postulate, this craving for something more real than this so-called real world, which in itself is more convincing to me than any subtle argumentation in support of what is called the First Cause of all causes. Ask yourselves, Can you imagine the craving of hunger in nature unless there was something in nature to satisfy that hunger? I go even further, and ask, Can you imagine an eye without light, or an ear without sound? Neither can we imagine this craving for the Unseen, the Unheard, the Unperceived, or the Infinite, unless there was

something to satisfy that craving, if only we look for it where alone it can be found.

Teleological Argument.

As soon as this non-phenomenal is represented in the likeness of man,—and man knows nothing better in the whole world, and in his whole mind than man,—the *teleological argument* comes in by itself. The author and creator of the universe, if once conceived, cannot be conceived except as a wise being, or, *per viam eminentiae*, as the wisest being, and man claims the right to look for his wisdom in his works. Thus one of the Vedic poets exclaims, VII. 86, 1[1]:

'Wise and mighty are the works of him who stemmed asunder the wide firmaments (heaven and earth). He lifted on high the bright and glorious heaven; he stretched out apart the starry sky and the earth.'

It may be said that the existence of a creator has not been proved, and that therefore it is folly to predicate anything of him or of his works. I do not deny this, I only assert as an historical fact, whatever that may be worth, that if once the phenomenal and the non-phenomenal had been conceived, man being what he is, was constrained, and, in that sense, justified in conceiving the author of both under the form of the best he knew, that is, under the form of man or anthropomorphically.

Anthropomorphism.

Man may know that anthropomorphism is wrong in the abstract, but it cannot be wrong for man, for

[1] *Selected Essays*, i. 149.

it is after all the best that, being what he is, he can conceive. If he could imagine or conceive anything better than man, naturally the anthropomorphic conception, or, at least some parts of it, would go. But unless it was possible to conceive anything wiser than wise, or better than good, the author and creator would always to human beings retain these human qualities, and his work, the phenomenal world, would necessarily be scanned for proofs of his purposes and his wisdom.

This is the teleological argument in its most rudimentary form.

Ontological Argument.

As to the *ontological argument* we may discover traces of this also in the earliest speculations of Indian sages. We saw how they simply state: 'In the beginning this (world) was existent, one only, without a second.' But they add: 'Others say, in the beginning this world was non-existent, and from the non-existent the existent was born.' After these two alternatives follows an argument which, though it differs from the ontological in its present form, contains nevertheless the true germ of it: 'How could that which is, be born of that which is not?' This is the question asked by the author of the Brâhmaṇa, and the very question supplies the answer, It could not.

This may seem a very crude form in which to state the ontological argument, but it is its very crudeness that makes it instructive. I hope I shall not be understood as if I thought any of these crude attempts at solving the great problems of the world supplied a real solution of them. History cannot replace philo-

sophy, but it can assist it, it can serve as the best preparation for it.

A Creator.

It is quite true that the fact that the great portion of the human race believed in a creator, does in no way establish the existence of a creator. I am not even certain that we should find that the majority of the human race shared in the belief in a creator, that is to say, a maker, such as a carpenter or a potter. We know that the Buddhists, whose number is considerable, reject the idea of a creator, or at all events do not either assert or deny it. They adduce very good reasons for this abstinence, our incompetence to know anything beyond what comes to us first through the senses,—the very argument repeated by Kant; and secondly, the imperfection of the world, which ought to restrain us from ascribing its workmanship to a perfect being. In other countries, too, the idea of a creation was sternly rejected, as, for instance, by Heraclitus, who declares that no god and no man made this world, but that it was always and is and will be, an eternal fire, assuming forms and destroying them[1]. And this protest, it should be remembered, came from a man who was able to say with equal honesty that 'God is day and night, winter and summer, war and peace, satiety and hunger—and that he is called according to the pleasure of every one[2].' What I wish to put clearly before you is that neither the assertion of creation by certain Semitic authorities, nor the denial of creation by certain

[1] *Heracliti Reliquiae*, ed. Bywater, xx.

[2] See Pfleiderer, *Heraklit*, p. 353. Could we read ὅκως πῦρ σκότῳ συμμιγές?

Aryan authorities, could possibly settle that question in one way or the other.

All I wish to show is that an historical study of the theory of creation, and of the reasons for which it was either held or rejected in different countries and in different ages, is the best preparation, nay, an indispensable preparation, before we approach the solution of the problem itself, if indeed it admits of any solution at the hand of created beings.

Astronomers study the Ptolemaic before they approach the Copernican system, and they become most firmly convinced of the truth of the latter after they have themselves discovered the flaws inherent in the former system.

Origin of the idea of cause.

We can see how at a very early period in the growth of the human mind, the idea of a father, of a maker and fashioner of the world, was inevitable, and it is equally inevitable at the present day with large classes of people whose mind has not yet risen beyond the level of those early sages. They speak a language of their own, and with them father or maker expresses all they have to express.

The ideas which an honest peasant connects with the fatherhood of God do not differ much from what the natives of California declared in their simple language, when asked as to their faith in any higher powers. 'Their God,' they declared, 'had neither father nor mother, and his origin was quite unknown. But he is present everywhere, he sees everything even at midnight, though himself invisible to human eyes. He is the friend of all good people, and punishes the evil-doers.'

If our metaphysicians define God as *Causa sui*, do they say much more than what the Californians meant when they said that their God had neither father nor mother? or what the Vedic poets meant when they spoke of one who was the father of the father?[1]

It will hardly be believed that these Californians, with a creed to my mind more perfect than that of most nations, are classed by Sir John Lubbock among the races without any religion[2].

At a later time, when the human intellect had reached a higher stage, it was no doubt inevitable that many characteristics of father and maker should have to be eliminated in order to make room for the higher concept of an author of the world. Nay, the time would come when a thinker like Heraclitus would revolt against the very idea of a manufacturer of the world, and would assert that none of the beings who were then called gods could have performed so stupendous a work. This idea of any being manufacturing the world, as a potter on his wheel, became so repugnant to more enlightened minds, that Buddha, as we saw, declared it irreverent even to ask that question, much more to attempt to answer it.

And if we turn our eyes away from that Indian sage, who became the founder of one of the great religions of the world, and ask what Des Cartes, the founder of modern philosophy, has to say on the same subject, we find a wonderful similarity of thought, in spite of great diversity of expression. 'Knowing as I do,' he writes, 'that my nature is extremely weak

[1] Rv. I. 164, 16, Sáḥ pítúḥ pitấ asat. VI. 16, 35.

[2] Roskoff, *Das Religionswesen der rohesten Naturvölker*, p. 66; Lubbock, *Civilisation*, pp. 176, 271.

and limited, while that of God is immeasurable, incomprehensible, and infinite, I have no difficulty in acknowledging that he has command of an infinitude of things of which my mind cannot compass the causes; and this alone suffices to convince me that the whole class of causes supplied by the end in view is useless in regard to natural things; for it seems to me, it would be rash in me to investigate and undertake to recover the impenetrable ends of God[1].'

If we watch these changes of thought among men anxious for truth and for truth only, we learn at all events to approach this question in a calm and perfectly judicial spirit. We are not carried away into mere denunciation, but are inclined to listen with equanimity both to those who assert and to those who deny the theory of creation in the ordinary sense of that word.

Religions without a Creator.

Unless it were known that some of the lowest as well as some of the highest races, the Negroes of Africa[2], for instance, and the Buddhists of Ceylon, either ignored or rejected the idea of creation altogether, and yet possessed religions of great efficacy and extreme subtlety, we should doubt whether religion was even possible without a belief in a Creator. But it is a fact that the very denial of a creating God arose in many cases from a too exalted conception of the deity, whether on moral or philosophical grounds. From a moral point of view it has been asserted again and again that so imperfect a world as this ought

[1] *Meditations*, ed. Cousin, i. 297; Martineau, *Study of Religion*, i. 272.

[2] Reville, *Les Religions des Peuples non-civilisés*, i. 271.

not to be looked upon as the work of a perfect Being; while from a philosophical point of view it has been urged that a belief in a Creator would involve a belief that there was a time when there was a divine cause, but no effect.

The denial of a Creator, therefore, so far from being necessarily anti-religious, may be traced back to religion itself, that is, to a feeling that shrinks from assigning to a Supreme Being anything unworthy of it or contradicting its essential attributes.

The Theory of Evolution.

If this had been clearly seen, and if our modern philosophers had learnt from history that a man who does not admit a creator is not *ipso facto* an atheist, a controversy which in England at least has of late excited the most passionate heat, might have been carried on with perfect scientific composure—I allude, of course, to the theory of evolution, as revived by Darwin. It was disheartening to hear the followers of Darwin stigmatised as atheists, because they rejected the theory of a Creator in the ordinary acceptation of that word. It was equally painful to see the opponents of Darwin's theories treated as mere bigots, because, if they did not accept the theory of evolution, they must believe in the account of creation as given in Genesis. Is there no room left then in our modern schools of philosophy for men like Descartes?

It was owing to a want of what I should like to call 'historical preparedness' that all this unseemly squabbling about evolution was stirred up. In Germany the idea of evolution had so completely

pervaded the popular literature and become so familiar to every thinking man that I was as much surprised at the excitement caused by the 'Origin of Species,' as by the ferment stirred up by 'Essays and Reviews.' Darwin's book ushered in a new intellectual spring, but it produced no cataclysm in the world of science.

As, however, we have lately been told again, after it seemed that the principal disputants had become more reasonable, that Darwin's theory of evolution forms a kind of deluge, dividing ante-diluvian from post-diluvian science, a few remarks on the real history and meaning of evolution may not be out of place at the point which we have reached in our own argument. We want to establish the advantages which the Historical has over the Theoretic Method, whether in the Science of Religion or in every other department of human knowledge. Let us see then what advantages it would have conferred, if it had been adopted by the principal disputants in the Darwinian controversy.

Meaning of Evolution.

Let us, first of all, see clearly what this word evolution really means, if applied to nature or to anything else.

Evolution is really the same as history, if we take it in its objective sense. Subjectively, history (ἱστορία) meant originally inquiry, or a desire to know; it then came to mean knowledge, obtained by inquiry; and lastly, in a purely objective sense, the objects of such knowledge.

Natural History was originally an inquiry about nature (ἡ περὶ φύσεως ἱστορία); then knowledge of

nature, while we now use Natural History in the sense of the facts of nature. The same with political history. It meant at first an inquiry into political events, then a knowledge and likewise a coherent account of such events, and lastly, these political events themselves, as known by historians and philosophers.

History, however, if it is worthy of its name, is more than a mere acquaintance with facts and dates. It is the study of a continuous process in the events of the world, the discovery of cause and effect, and, in the end, of a law that holds the world together. Apply this historical study to nature, and try to discover in it an uninterrupted succession of cause and effect, a continuity which holds the whole of nature together; and what is this but what is now called *evolution*? Evolution, if only properly understood, has always seemed to me a very old friend; it is history, or what used to be called pragmatic history, under a new name. What used to be called the history of language, is now called its evolution. What used to be studied under the name of the history of law and religion, is now presented to us as the evolution of law and religion. Suppose there were no evolution in language, in law or in religion, would there be a history? Would they admit of any scientific treatment at all? Nay, is not evolution, if we look at it sharply, nothing but an *alias* for causality in all our experience, and, in the end, from Kant's point of view, a necessity inherent in all rational thought? *Entwickelung* is a very old word in German, and seemed very harmless; but when it appeared in its English disguise as *evolution*, it was

supposed to portend *revolution*, and all that is terrible and destructive. I can understand a man not believing in gravitation, but a rational being denying evolution in its true sense ceases *ipso facto* to be a rational being.

Darwin admits a Creator.

We saw that with regard to the origin of the world, evolutionary theories were much older than any others. And yet when Darwin and others brought forward their accumulated knowledge in support of what may almost be called the primeval theory of evolution, the outcry against it became so overwhelming that even Darwin himself seems to have been frightened, and glad to avail himself, as he tells us, of the support of an eminent theologian.

Darwin writes[1]: 'I see no good reason why the views given in this volume should shock the religious feelings of any one . . . A celebrated author and divine has written to me that he has gradually learnt to see that it is just as noble a conception of the Deity to believe that He created a few original forms capable of self-development into other and needful forms, as to believe that he organised a fresh act of creation to supply the voids caused by the action of his laws.'

Herder, the precursor of Darwin.

Darwin has often been blamed by his disciples for what they consider a 'timid concession to the prejudices of theologians,' and yet there are theologians to whom even that concession does not seem to go

[1] *Science of Thought*, p. 105

far enough—so well are they acquainted, as they imagine, with 'the impenetrable ends of God.'

I do not know who that celebrated author and divine may have been, but Darwin, if he had been better acquainted with the history of philosophy during the last century, ought to have known a most celebrated author and divine, the friend of Goethe and Schiller and Kant, who not only gave the sanction of his office, which was as high as that of any bishop in England, to the theory of evolution, but worked it out himself in so comprehensive a spirit, and, at the same time, in so much detail that in reading his books we seem to be reading an edition of Darwin, only published a hundred years ago. I am speaking of Herder, who was the head of the church in Saxe-Weimar, and at the same time one of the greatest philosophers and writers that Germany has ever produced. He was born in the same year as Lamarck, 1744, and died in 1803, Lamarck in 1829. I must read you a few extracts from his *Ideen zur Philosophie der Menschheit* (1784) in order to show you that I am by no means exaggerating when I call Herder the Darwin of the eighteenth century.

Herder traces the process of evolution from inorganic to organic nature, from the crystal through plants and animals to man, the younger brother of the animals, as he calls him. 'From stone to crystal,' he writes[1], 'from crystal to metals, from metals to the creation of plants, from plants to animals, and from these to man, we see the form of organisation rising higher and higher, and with it the forces and impulses of the creature becoming

[1] *Ideen zur Geschichte der Menschheit*, Fünftes Buch, p. 122.

differentiated, till all that can be comprehended in one became united in the human form. With man the series stops; we know of no creature above him, more complex and perfect in its organisation. Man seems to be the highest form which an earth-organism can reach.'

When Herder touches the problem of the beginning of life, he allows himself some poetic licence. 'In the sight of the eternal Being,' he writes, 'the shape of a small particle of ice, as it forms itself, and of a flake of snow on its surface, has some analogous relationship to the formation of the embryo.' (p. 49.)

'The plant is a higher kind of organisation than all formations of the earth, and the kingdom of plants has so wide an extension that it loses itself in those formations, and on the other hand approaches the animal kingdom in several of its germs and varieties. The plant possesses a kind of life and stages of life, it has sex, fructification, birth and death. The surface of the earth was ready for it before it was ready for animals and men. The plant pushes forward before them, and with its grasses, mildew, and mosses clings to those barren rocks which have not yet been trodden by the foot of any living thing.'

Herder then traces the transition from plants to plant-animals. 'The nutritive organs,' he says (p. 63), 'are already separated in them; they have something analogous to animal sensation and voluntary motion; but their principal organic power is still nutrition and propagation.' He then proceeds to molluscs, insects, cold-blooded and warm-blooded animals, and points to the elements in which they live, or what is sometimes called their environment, as a determining cause

of their peculiar organisation. 'The bird,' he says (p. 51), 'flies in the air; every deviation of its form from that of terrestrial animals can be accounted for by its element. As soon as it touches the earth again, even if only in some monstrous intermediate form, as in bats and vampires, it assimilates itself to the human skeleton. The fish swimming in the water has its hands and feet grown together in fins and a tail, and there is little articulation in its limbs. As soon as it dwells on land, it develops, like the manatee, at least its forefeet, and the female develops mammæ. The sea-bear and sea-lion show clearly their four feet, though they are not able as yet to use their hind feet, but drag their five toes like rags of fins behind. They creep along quietly to warm themselves in the rays of the sun, and have advanced a step beyond the dulness of the misshapen seal. Thus there is progress from the dust of worms, from the chalk-houses of molluscs, and from the webs of insects towards more fully articulated and higher organisations.' . . .

'Each species takes care of itself (p. 45), as if it were the only one in existence; but by its side there is another species which limits it, and in this mutual relation of different and opposite species nature in its creative power found the means of preserving the whole.'

Herder then proceeds to show how in this struggle for existence whole species of animals and of men may have perished, while yet a general equilibrium was maintained. Man is in Herder's eyes no more than the brother of the animals (p. 44). Nay, he goes further, and in order to bring down the pride of man

he reminds him (p. 54) that he is nothing but a digestive tube (an ascidian), like his lowest brethren. He tells Buffon (p. 85) that he is wasting his eloquence in vain in denying the uniformity of organism in ape and man, and that the facts which he has collected himself refute him.

And yet the same Herder sees as clearly as anybody the specific difference of man and animal. After showing (p. 57) how irritations of the senses produce a reaction and a corresponding impulse, how sensations result in thought, and how there is in every living organism a perpetual progress, he points to language as a divine gift by which alone our slumbering reason was awakened, or by which the mere faculty which by itself would have remained dead for ever, became living force (p. 101). 'Animals,' he says (p. 104), 'are truly called in the East the Silent ones of the earth; for with the organisation of language only did man receive the breath of the deity, the seed of reason and eternal perfection, an echo of that creative call to the lordship of the earth, in fact the divine art of ideas, the mother of all arts.'

These ideas enunciated by Herder became the intellectual property of the whole of Germany, and reigned supreme in schools and universities during the early part of this century. In the school of Oken, in the first philosophy of Schelling, in the eloquent treatises of Goethe, all was evolution, development, or, as it was called in more general language, *Das Werden*, the Becoming. The same spirit, though in a higher sense, pervaded the philosophy of Hegel. According to him the whole world, as conceived by man, was an evolution, a development by logical necessity, to which all

facts must bow. If they would not, then *tant pis pour les faits.*

Evolution in the beginning of our century.

I do not remember the heyday of that school, but I still remember its last despairing struggles. I still remember at school and at University rumours of carbon, half solid, half liquid, the famous *Urschleim*, now called Protoplasm[1], the substance out of which everything was evolved. I remember the more or less amusing discussions about the loss of the tail, and about races supposed to be still in possession of that ancestral appendage. I do not know whether Lord Monboddo's works are still read in Scotland, but whoever wishes for evidence in support of our descent from hairy and tailed ancestors, will find more startling evidence in his portly quartos than in any of Darwin's publications.

Gottfried Hermann.

I well remember my own particular teacher, the great Greek scholar Gottfried Hermann[2], giving deep offence to his theological colleagues by publishing an essay in 1840 in which he tried to prove the descent of man from an ape. Allow me to quote a few extracts from this rare and little-noticed essay. As the female is always less perfect than the male, Hermann, now nearly fifty years ago, argued that the law of development required that Eve must have existed

[1] The deep-sea ooze which Haeckel took for the physical basis of all life and the *Protogenes Haeckelii* have both been surrendered long ago.

[2] 'Evam ante Adamum creatam fuisse, sive de quodam communi apud Mosen et Hesiodum errore circa creationem generis humani,' in Ilgen's *Zeitschrift für die histor. Theologie*, 1840, B. x. pp. 61–70.

before Adam, not Adam before Eve. Quoting the words of Ennius,

Simia quam similis, turpissima bestia, nobis,

he goes on in his own peculiar Latin:—

'Ex hac nobili gente quid dubitemus unam aliquando simiam exortam putare, quae paullo minus belluina facie et indole esset? Ea, sive illam Evam sive Pandoram appellare placet, quum ex alio simio gravida facta esset, peperit, ut saepenumero fieri constat, filium matri quam patri similiorem, qui primus homo fuit.

'Haec ergo est hominis generisque humani origo, non illa quidem valde honesta, sed paullo tamen honestior multoque probabilior, quam si ex luto aqua permixto, cui anima fuerit inspirata, genus duceremus.'

Surely Gottfried Hermann was a bolder man than even Darwin, and to me, who had attended his lectures at Leipzig in 1841, Darwin's *Descent of Man*, published in 1871, was naturally far less novel and far less startling by its theory than by the new facts by which that theory was once more supported.

Kant on the Chimpanzee.

Kant's philosophy also had long familiarised students of Anthropology with the same ideas. For he, too, towards the end of his *Anthropologie*, had spoken of a future period in the development of nature, when an Oran-Utang or Chimpanzee may develop his organs of locomotion, touch, and speech to the perfection of human organs, raise his brain to an organ of thought, and slowly elevate himself by social culture. I cannot admire such airy speculations, even if they come from Kant, but I ask, Is there anything in Darwin so

much more startling and novel than these theories of Herder, Gottfried Hermann, and Kant?

Darwin.

Darwin felt compelled by the enormous weight of analogy to adopt the theory that man is the genealogical descendant of some kind of ape. Haeckel adds that the statement that man was developed from lower vertebrates, and proximately from genuine apes, is a special deduction which follows with absolute certainty from the general induction of the theory of descent[1]. Even if that were so, it would remain a deduction from a general intuition of a theory of descent; it would remain a theoretical conviction of an eminent zoologist. But we must not forget that another eminent zoologist, who yields to no one either in knowledge or in outspoken honesty, I mean Virchow, has never on this point allowed himself to be carried away by mere analogy, or even by the powerful pleading of Darwin. We know how able and persuasive a pleader Darwin could be, but all his eloquence was in vain against the conscientious convictions of Virchow.

When Darwin wished to show how man could have been born of an animal which was hairy and remained so during life, he could not well maintain that an animal without hair was fitter to survive than an animal with hair. He therefore appealed to sexual selection, and wished us to believe that our female semi-human progenitrix lost her hair by some accident, became thus, as Hermann would have said, *minus belluina facie et indole, minus belluina, sed*

[1] See Roskoff, *Religionswesen*, p. 165.

magis bella, so that in the process of time this partial or complete baldness, call it leprosy or leucoderma, was perpetuated from mother to son, and made us what we are.

Oken.

These theories put forward by Herder and Kant, and more or less seriously advocated by Gottfried Hermann, found the most enthusiastic defender in Oken. Oken (1779–1851) was not satisfied with deriving man from an animal. He and his disciples taught that the transition from inorganic to organic nature was likewise a mere matter of development. The first step, according to him, was the formation of rising bubbles, such as we see in champagne, which he at that time called infusoria, and the manifold repetition of which led, as he taught, to the formation of plants and animals. The plant was represented by him as an imperfect animal, the animal as an imperfect man. To doubt that the various races of men were descended from one pair was considered at that time, and even so late as the days of Prichard, not only a theological, but a biological heresy. All variety was traced back to unity—and in the beginning there was nothing but Being; which Being, coming in conflict with Not-being, entered upon the process of Becoming, of development, of evolution.

Reaction.

While this philosophy was still being preached in some German universities, a sharp reaction took place in others, followed by the quick ascendency of that *Historical School* of which I spoke in a former lecture. It was heralded in Germany by such men as Niebuhr, Savigny, Bopp, Grimm, Otfried Müller, Johannes

Müller, the two Humboldts, and many others whose names are less widely known in England, but who did excellent work, each in his own special line.

Historical School: its true character.

It would be a great mistake to suppose that the Historical School was exclusively concerned with the history of problems, that it cared for the past only, and not for the present and the future. On the contrary, that school wants to show that there is no break between the past and the present, but that an uninterrupted continuity connects what has been thought of old with what is being thought at present. History is to teach us to understand what is, by teaching us to understand what has been. All our present difficulties are difficulties of our own making. All the tangles at which we are so impatiently pulling were made either by ourselves, or by those who came before us. Who else should have made them? The Historical School, knowing how hopeless it is to pull and tear at a tangled reel by main force, quietly takes us behind the scenes, and shows us how first one thread and then another and a third, and in the end hundreds and thousands of threads went wrong, and became entangled, but how in the beginning they lay before man's eyes as even and as regular as on a weaver's loom.

Men who possess the historical instinct, and who, whenever they have to deal with any of the grave problems of our age, always ask how certain difficulties and apparent contradictions first arose, are what we should call practical men; and, as a rule, they are far more successful in unravelling knotty questions than the philosopher who has a theory and

a remedy ready for everything, and who actually prides himself on his ignorance of the past.

Stanley.

I think I can best make my meaning clear by taking a well-known instance. Whether Dean Stanley was what is now called a scientific historian, a very laborious student of ancient chronicles and charters, is not for me to say; but if I were asked to define his mind, and his attitude towards all the burning questions of the day, whether in politics, or morality, or religion, I should say it was historical. He was a true disciple of the *Historical School.* I could show it by examining the position he took in dealing with some of the highest questions of theology. But I prefer, as an easier illustration, to consider his treatment of one of the less exciting questions, the question of *vestments.* Incredible as it may sound to us, it is a fact nevertheless that not many years ago a controversy about surplices, and albs, and dalmatics, and stoles was raging all over England. The question by whom, at what time, and in what place, the surplice should be worn, divided brother from brother, and father from child, as if that piece of white linen possessed some mysterious power, or could exercise some miraculous influence on the spirit of the wearer. Any one who knew Stanley would know how little he cared for vestments or garments, and how difficult he would have found it to take sides, either right or left, in a controversy about millinery or ritual. But what did he do? 'Let us look at the surplice *historically,*' he said. What is a surplice?—and first of all, what is the historical origin or the etymology of the word? *Surplice* is the Latin *super-pellicium.*

Super-pellicium means what is worn over a fur or fur-jacket, which was called *pellicium*. Now this fur-jacket was not worn by the primitive Christians in Rome, or Constantinople, or Jerusalem, nor is there any mention of such a vestment at the time of the Apostles. What, then, is the history of that fur-jacket? So far as we know, it was a warm jacket worn by peasants in countries of colder climate, worn in many countries to the present day. Like most of the garments which we now consider as exclusively ecclesiastical, it was worn by clergy and laity alike. As this fur-jacket was apt to get dirty and unsightly, a kind of smock-frock or blouse, that could be washed from time to time, was worn over it—and this was called the *super-pellicium*, the surplice. Stanley thought it sufficient gently to remind the wearer of the surplice that what he was so proud of was only the lineal descendant of a German peasant's blouse; and I believe he was right, and his historical explanation certainly produced a better effect on all who had a sense of history and of humour than the most elaborate argument on the mystical meaning of that robe of purity and innocence.

Nor did this historical *denouement* take away from the true character of the surplice. Being worn over the every-day garment, the shabby and dirty fur-coat, it was a sign of real respect both for the sacred building in which it was worn, and for the congregation of the faithful whose minister the wearer of the surplice was. That was the real meaning of the white and pure surplice, and we find here as elsewhere that we never lose anything that is worth having, by historical truth.

Stanley rendered the same service to other vestments. Under the wand of the historian, the *alb* turned out to be the old Roman tunic or shirt, and the deacon officiating in his alb was recognised as a servant working in his shirt-sleeves. The *dalmatic*, again, was traced back to the shirt with long sleeves worn by the Dalmatian peasants, which became recognised as the dress of the deacon about the time of Constantine. The *chasuble*[1] turned out to be a great-coat, worn originally by laity and clergy alike; while the *cope*, descended from the *copa* or *capa*, also called *pluviale*, was translated by Stanley as a 'waterproof.' The *mitre* was identified with the caps and turbans worn in the East by princes and nobles, and to this day by the peasant women. The division into two points was shown to be the mark of the crease which is the consequence of its having been folded and carried under the arm, like an opera-hat. The *stole*, lastly, in the sense of a scarf, had a still humbler origin. It was the substitute for the *orarium* or handkerchief, used for blowing the nose. No doubt, the possession and use of a handkerchief was in early times restricted to the 'higher circles.' It is so to the present day, in Borneo, for instance, where only the king is allowed to carry a handkerchief and to blow his nose in that way. In like manner then as in Borneo the handkerchief became the insignia of royalty, it rose in the Roman Church to become the distinctive garment of the deacon.

[1] *Chasuble*, Low Lat. *casabula*, a little house; *cassock*, Ital. *casacca*, a little house. *Super-pellicium*, from *pellis*, skin; but *plush*, Fr. *peluche*, from *pilucius*, hairy, Lat. *pilus*, hair. *Wig*, Old Ital. *piluccare*, to pluck the hair; Sardinian *pilucca*, a mass of hair; Span. *peluca*; Port. *peruca*; Ital. *parruca*; Fr. *perruque*; Germ. *Perücke*; Dutch *peruyk*; Old Engl. *perwigge, periwig, wig.*

I know that some of these explanations have been contested, perhaps rightly contested, but the general drift of the argument remains unaffected by such reservations. I only quote them in order to explain what I meant by Stanley's historical attitude, the very attitude which all who belong to the Historical School, and are guided by an historical spirit, like to assume when brought face to face with the problems of the day.

What I maintain then is that a study of the history of philosophy would in this as in other instances have proved an immense advantage. It would have prevented on the one hand the foolish outcry against Darwin's works, as if they had broached an unheard-of heresy, and it would have moderated on the other the extravagant and ignorant panegyrics [1], detested, I feel sure, by no one more than by Darwin himself. Darwin's real merit consisted, not in discovering evolution, but in suggesting new explanations of evolution, such as natural selection, survival of the fittest, influence of environment, sexual selection, etc. These explanations, whether they are still adequate or not, give to Darwin his commanding position in the history of natural philosophy. We know at present that, from a physiological point of view, the transition from any other animal to man has not been established; and we likewise know that, if it ever were established, it would leave us exactly as we are, divided by language, as by an impassable Rubicon, from every other animal. The nearer the

[1] Ἐὰν δ' ἐπὶ μικροῖς τις σεμνύνηται, τοσοῦτ' ἀπέχει τοῦ τιμῆς τινὸς διὰ ταῦτα τυχεῖν, ὥστ' ἀπειρόκαλος πρὸς ἔδοξεν εἶναι. Demosth. Androl., p. 617.

approach between the physical nature of an ape and that of a man, the wider and the more wonderful will that gulf appear which language has fixed between them [1].

Necessity of Historical Study of Religion.

If therefore I maintain the necessity of an historical and comparative study of religion, or venture to represent it as the best preparation for the study of what is called the philosophy of religion, what I mean is that it acclimatises and invigorates our mind, and produces that judicial temper which is so essential in the treatment of religious problems. Whatever philosophy may have to teach us hereafter, it will prove useful in the mean time to have learnt from history at least so elementary a lesson as that no opinion is true, simply because it has been held either by the greatest intellects or by the largest number of human beings at different periods in the history of the world. No one can spend years of his life in the study of the religions of the world, beginning with the lowest and ending with the highest forms, no one can watch the sincerity of religious endeavour, the warmth of religious feeling, the nobleness of religious conduct among races whom we are inclined to call either pagan or savage, without learning at all events a lesson of humility. Anybody, be he Jew, Christian,

[1] Mr. Romanes, in his recent work on *Mental Evolution in Man*, 1888, has summed up the old arguments in favour of a possible transition from animal to human intellect with great ingenuity, but he has not refuted the facts on the other side, and in several cases hardly apprehended their force. Even his conception of evolution seems to me far from correct. Again, when he states that I admit not more than 121 roots as the residue of an analysis of Aryan speech, he mistakes roots for radical concepts, and Aryan for Sanskrit. Whatever we may hope to achieve in future, we have not as yet reduced the number of Sanskrit roots to less than 800.

Mohammedan or Brahman, if he has a spark of modesty left, must feel that it would be nothing short of a miracle that his own religion alone should be perfect throughout, while that of every other believer should be false and wrong from beginning to end.

History teaches us that religions change and must change with the constant changes of thought and language in the progress of the human race. The Vedic religion led on to the religion of the Upanishads, the religion of the Upanishads led on to the doctrines which Buddha embodied in a new religion. Not only the Jewish religion, but the religion of Greece and Rome also, had to yield to Christianity as more on a level with the height of thought reached after long struggles by the leading nations of the world. It is wonderful, no doubt, to see religions belonging to an almost prehistoric stratum of thought, such as ancient Brahmanism, surviving to the present day in a modified, yet not always more elevated form. But even this becomes historically intelligible, if we consider that society consists of different intellectual strata. Some of the reformers of our own religion four hundred years ago stood on an eminence which even now is far beyond the reach of the majority. In theology, as in geology, the whole scale of superimposed strata is often exhibited on the surface of the present day, and there may still be Silurians walking about among us in broad daylight. It seems as if an historical study of religion alone could enable us to understand those Silurians, nay help us to sympathise with them, and to honour them for the excellent use which they often make of the small talent committed to them.

Criticisms answered.

After having said so much in support of the Historical School, more particularly for a right study of religion, I feel bound in conclusion to notice some recent criticisms which seem to me to arise from a complete misapprehension of the character of that school. It has been observed by an eminent Scotch theologian [1], that the tendency to substitute history for science, and the historical method for the scientific method, is prevalent in the present day in theology, as well as in ethics and jurisprudence, social philosophy and political economy. 'Obviously, however,' he says, 'it rests on exaggeration and illusion, and confounds things which ought to be distinguished. Neither history of the objects of a science, nor history of the ideas or doctrines of a science, is science, and the historical method of itself can only give us, in connexion with science, either or both of these forms of history. It is therefore inherently absurd to suppose that the historical method can be sufficient in such theological disciplines as Natural Theology and Christian Dogmatics. In reality it is not directly or immediately available in the study of these disciplines at all, and that just because it does not directly or immediately yield theory, doctrine, science. Only he who knows both the history of the objects and the history of the ideas of a science, and especially of a psychological, social, or religious science, can be expected to advance the science.'

Is not that an admission which covers all we claim for the Historical School, namely that it alone is able to advance the science of religion? But

[1] R. Flint, in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, s. v. Theology, p. 266.

he goes on:—'In the sphere of religion, as in every other sphere, to confound history with science is to eliminate and destroy science; but in no sphere is knowledge of history more a condition of the attainment of science, and historical research, properly conducted, more serviceable to scientific investigation, than in that of religion.'

I claim no more, and should be quite satisfied by this admission.

And lastly: 'To the historical method we owe, not only the historical disciplines of theology, but also in a considerable measure the recent progress of its positive or theoretical disciplines. It can never, however, be, as some fanatical disciples of the historical school would have us to suppose, the method of these last.'

This is, as you will perceive, very strong language, arising no doubt from a very strong conviction. But you will generally find that if one philosopher, who is not a fool, calls another philosopher who is not a fool either, absurd, there is some misunderstanding between the two. Now the historical school, because it calls itself historical, does not profess to devote itself to the history only of any given science. There are, for instance, the inductive sciences, and there is a history of the inductive sciences. Now the historical school never intended to limit itself to the study of the history of these sciences. That is a subject by itself. What the historical school meant to teach was that no actual problem of any science should be studied without a reference to what had been said or written on that problem from the day on which it was first started to the present day. I see no other,

or at all events, no better means by which the mind could be strengthened and matured for grappling with any problem. The very mistakes of those who came before us, serve us often as finger-posts for our own line of research. Suppose a man were to study Comparative Philology without making himself acquainted with the labours of Bopp, and Pott, and Grimm, with their false as well as their true discoveries, what a waste of time would it entail on him to explore afresh all the avenues which they had explored and many of which they had found to lead to nothing! Or suppose a man should attempt the etymology of a modern word, without tracing it back, first of all, to its earliest form that is within our reach. We should then have again such etymologies as *ear* of corn being the same as *ear*, while, if we only go as far back as Gothic, we find *ahs* for ear of corn, but *ausô* for ear.

Nor should it be supposed that history ends with the last century. The principle of the historical school is not to ignore the present, but to try to understand the present by means of the past. A man may be a philosopher, no doubt, without knowing Plato or Aristotle or Descartes or Kant; but unless he is a man of marvellous intuition, he will never acquire that sure judgment and that sense of proportion which can only be acquired by an acquaintance with many minds. His philosophy will be in great danger of becoming an anachronism.

But whatever may be possible in other sciences, let no one venture on the open sea of religious discussion without having the compass of history steadily before his eyes. Let no one attempt to study Natural

Religion without having served his apprenticeship as a patient student of the history of the religions of the world. I cannot sum up the advantages of historical study and of the historical spirit in dealing with all the problems of life better than in the words of Mr. John Morley: 'It gives us a view of the ground we stand on. It gives us a solid backing of precedent and experiences. It teaches us where we are. It protects us against imposture and surprise!'[1]

[1] John Morley, *On the Study of Literature*, p. 11.

LECTURE XI.

THE MATERIALS FOR THE STUDY OF NATURAL RELIGION.

Language, Myth, Customs and Laws, Sacred Books.

HAVING first determined by means of definition the exact limits of Natural Religion, and having afterwards explained the reasons why the Historical Method seems to be the most advantageous for a truly scientific treatment of the religions of the world, we have now to find out what materials there are accessible to us from which to study the growth and decay of Natural Religion in the widest sense of the word.

These materials may be divided into four classes.

First comes *language*, which in its continuous growth leads us back to the earliest periods of thought, or, at all events, to periods which cannot be reached by any other kind of evidence.

The second class is formed by what it is the fashion to call *mythology*, which, as I shall show, is really an inevitable phase in the development of language and thought.

The third class of evidence comprises religious *customs* and *laws*, which may be studied either in historical documents, or by actual observation of such

customs and laws as are still prevalent among civilised as well as uncivilised races.

The fourth class consists of the *Sacred Books* of the great religions of the world.

Language as Evidence.

If, as I hope to show, every word was originally a deed, was, in fact, a creative act, calling into life a concept which did not exist before, it will sound less surprising that it is possible to discover in words, taken by themselves, a record of the most primitive thoughts of mankind. It is true that a dictionary by itself conveys no meaning, and that it is only in a sentence that words become significant. But we know now that originally every word was a sentence. When a man said sar-it, river, he really said, 'running (sar) here (it)'; when he said dar-u, tree, he said, 'splitting (dar) here (u).' But men who called their trees 'splitting here,' or what is split, must have been men who had learnt to use trees for certain purposes, and who probably possessed some tools, however rude, to help them in carrying out their work. Men who called their horse a quick runner, as-va, *equus*, ἵππος, must have been men to whom the horse had become useful as a runner, for there were many wild animals quicker than the horse, though they were not even singled out for a name, but were comprehended under the general term of wild animals.

You will see now how, if we can but find an entrance into the ancient workshop of language, we can still listen there to the earliest thoughts of man. But where is that workshop?

In order to answer that question, I shall have to

devote some of my next lectures to giving you a short account of the discoveries made by the students of the Science of Language. That science has opened before us a new world, and it will be necessary for me to place before you a map of that new world, though in the broadest outline only, in order that you may be able to watch the earliest migrations, not only of language, but of thought, of myth, of religion, and of law and custom.

Survey of Languages. Aryan Family.

Let us begin with Europe, and in Europe with England[1].

English.

Have you ever asked yourselves what it means that we speak English, what a language is, what the English language is, where it sprang up or how it was made, and how it came to be spoken in these distant isles, and from thence again over nearly the whole civilised world?

Nothing seems to me so wonderful as the power which man possesses of ceasing to wonder at what is most wonderful. It has been said with great truth that a sign or wonder can never exist twice, for when it happened the second time we should call it quite natural, and cease to wonder at it. Some philosophers go even further and maintain that a sign or wonder ceases to exist the moment it does exist, because whenever it exists, there must have been a sufficient

[1] I have left here this short survey of languages, which I found it necessary to give in my first course of lectures, in order to avoid the necessity of explaining again and again the names and the relationship of the languages in which the religions of the world found their expression. Readers who require fuller information, may consult my *Science of Language*, 1891.

reason for it, and whatever has a sufficient reason, ceases to be wonderful. Well, whatever the reason may be, we certainly all of us seem to have acquired what Orientals consider a proof of the highest breeding, namely to wonder at nothing, to be surprised by nothing, the old *Nil admirari.*

Here we find ourselves in a small island, adjacent to what is a mere promontory of the vast Asiatic continent. And in this small island which we call Great Britain, and in this mere promontory which we call the Continent of Europe, we speak a language which is to all intents and purposes the same as that which is spoken in Ceylon, an island adjacent to the southern promontory of the same Asiatic continent, called the Dekhan or Southern India.

This discovery of the unity of language in India and England is only about a hundred years old, and when it was first announced, it startled some of the most learned and judicious men to that extent that Dugald Stewart, for instance, declared it was an utter impossibility, and that Sanskrit must be an invention of those arch-deceivers, the Brahmans, who wanted to make themselves as good as ourselves, and as old as ourselves ; nay, a great deal better and a great deal older too.

We have recovered from that surprise, and we find now at the beginning of most Latin and Greek grammars a few paragraphs about the Indo-European or Aryan family of speech, and a statement that much may be learnt from Sanskrit, the sacred language of the inhabitants of India, as to the antecedents of our own language, and as to how Latin and Greek became what they are.

But there are still greater miracles in English such as we find it spoken at the present day, if only we had eyes to see and ears to hear them. English is said to consist of 250,000 words, and most of these words are capable of ever so many changes which we call declension, conjugation, degrees of comparison, composition, and all the rest. That is to say, there is ready made for every one of us an instrument with at least several millions of keys on which we play, as if it were a pianoforte with ninety-six keys.

When uncivilised people hear an organ for the first time, they generally feel a curiosity to open it, to see how it acts, and what it is made of. But this gigantic organ which we call our language, we never try to open, we never ask how it was made or who made it. No, we take it for granted or given, and we think we may thump and hammer on it to our heart's content, trusting that it will always remain in tune.

Veda, olδa.

But though the relationship between the languages of India, Persia, Armenia, Greek, Latin, Celtic, Slavonic, and Teutonic has now become part and parcel of the general stock of knowledge, it is seldom realised how close that relationship really is. It is known that the roots of all these languages are the same, that their grammatical articulation is the same, that a number of important words, such as the numerals, names for father, mother, sky, sun and moon, horse and cow, are the same. But it was only a study of Sanskrit, and of the most ancient, the Vedic Sanskrit, which enabled scholars to discover that

so mysterious a change as that which we observe, for instance, in the vowels of *to wit*, to know, and *I wot*, I know, or in German in *Ich weiss*, I know, and *Wir wissen*, we know, has its first cause in a change of accent which took place in the most ancient Sanskrit. We must remember that the accent exists, or, at all events, is marked in Vedic Sanskrit only, that it was in fact unknown to scholars till the Veda began to be studied, and we shall then understand what it means that a change of accent observed in Sanskrit three thousand years ago, still determines the vowels of words which we use to-day. *I wot* is the AS. *wât*, the Gothic *wait*, I know. We have the infinitive preserved in the phrase *to wit*. This *wit* is the Sanskrit vid, to know. From it is formed in Sanskrit a perfect véda, having the meaning of the present, just like the Greek οἶδα, i. e. *Faida*. The change of *i* into *ai* or *é* is due to the accent, which in Sanskrit falls in the singular on the first syllable. This diphthong *ai* in Sanskrit, *ai* in Gothic, becomes regularly â in AS., and *o* in English.

But that is not all. Why did the Greeks say οἶδα in the singular, but ἴσμεν in the plural? In Greek the accent does not move, it remains throughout on the first syllable. But in Sanskrit the accent which is on the first syllable in the singular, must migrate in the plural to the last syllable. Why it did so, is a question difficult to answer, but the most natural reason seems to be that the differentiating terminations in the plural continued to be felt as such, and therefore retained their stress longer than those of the singular. Hence we say véda, véttha, véda, but vidmás, vidá, vidús. This rule and this rule alone enables

us to account for ἴσμεν in ancient Greek, for *Ich weiss* and *Wir wissen* in modern German.

This will give you an idea of the solidarity, as the French call it, that binds the languages, and, if the languages, then the thoughts of all the members of the Aryan people together. And now as to their various degrees of relationship.

Anglo-Saxon.

English, as now spoken, may be traced back in one uninterrupted line to Anglo-Saxon. Of Anglo-Saxon we have the earliest documents in the seventh century, such as the *Beowulf*, an ancient epic of Teutonic origin. The language in which that poem is written was brought to England, or rather to the British isles, by emigrants and conquerors who came from the Continent. They were, as you know, Jutes, Saxons, and Angles, and they all spoke, not High German, but Low German. Low German does not mean vulgar German, but the German spoken in the low-lands of Germany. This Low German is in fact one of the four principal branches of the Teutonic class of the Aryan family, the other branches being Gothic, Scandinavian, and High German.

Gothic.

Gothic was spoken on the Danube in the fourth century, and it has left us the oldest specimens of Teutonic speech, the translation of the Bible of Ulfilas, who died in 381.

Continental Saxon.

Low German comprises the Saxon of the Continent, preserved to us in the *Heljand*, a poem of the ninth

century; the Anglo-Saxon, which we have already mentioned; the Old Frisian, known to us by documents of the thirteenth century, and slowly dying out at the present day; and lastly the Old Dutch, or Low Franconian, of which we have specimens in the so-called Carolingian Psalms, ascribed to the ninth century, and which is afterwards represented by Middle Dutch, Modern Dutch, Flemish, and the spoken Low Franconian.

Scandinavian.

The third branch, the Scandinavian, is represented by the Old Scandinavian literature between 800 and 1000 A.D., and is divided into (1) West-Nordish, i.e. Icelandic, and Norwegian, with a literature dating from the eleventh century; and the East-Nordish, that is, Swedish and Danish.

The ancient literature of Iceland, the two Eddas and numerous Sagas, will be of great importance to us for mythological purposes.

These three branches have one common characteristic feature, they are all under what is called '*Grimm's Law*,' that is to say, to put it broadly, they offer an aspirate where the other Aryan languages have a tenuis, they offer a tenuis where the others have a media, and they offer a media where the others have an aspirate.

We must not suppose, because Gothic is in so decided a minority, as compared to Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Celtic, or Slavonic, that therefore its aspirate is a corruption of a more ancient tenuis, or its media a corruption of a more primitive aspirate, or its tenuis a corruption of a former media. Looked upon as merely phonetic corruptions, such changes as t to th, th to d, and d to t in one and the same language would defy

all principles of phonetic science. Gothic is as old and as independent a national dialect of Aryan speech as Sanskrit, and, as such, had as much right to fix on tenuis, aspirate, and media for the discrimination of certain roots as Sanskrit had in fixing on media, tenuis, and aspirate. Thus the three roots which appear in Sanskrit as tar, dhar, and dar, would from the beginning appear in Gothic as *thar*, *dar*, and *tar*, but one and the same language would never change *tar* into *thar*, *dhar* into *dar*, and *dar* into *tar*. We know Gothic at a later time than Sanskrit, but that does not make Gothic a less primitive language than Sanskrit. And what applies to language, applies to mythology also. We know Vedic mythology at a much earlier date than Teutonic mythology, but that does not prove that the names and characters of the Teutonic gods were borrowed from the Veda.

Thorr and Thursday.

It is quite true, for instance, that if we want to know the original meaning of the Icelandic god *Thorr*, we have to trace back that word to the Anglo-Saxon *Thunor*, the modern *thunder*. It is true also that we have only to replace th by t, in order to be able to identify *thunor* with the Latin *ton-are*. But that does not prove that the Teutonic god *Thorr*, who still lives in the name of *Thursday*, *dies Jovis*, was not as old a god as any of the Vedic deities, and that from the very beginning he did not *thunder* with an initial aspirate, instead of an initial tenuis.

Týr and Tuesday.

If we apply Grimm's Law, we generally begin with what we are accustomed to call the classical languages,

Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin. If therefore we find Dyu, nom. Dyaus in Sanskrit, Ζεύς for Δγευς in Greek, *Iu-piter* for *Dyu-piter* in Latin, we trace them back to Gothic, Icelandic, Anglo-Saxon, in fact, to Low German, by simply replacing the media by the tenuis. This gives us the Icelandic *Týr*, which is preserved in *Týsdagr*, *dies Martis*, and in *Tuesday*, the Anglo-Saxon *Tíwesdæg*. But all this gives us no right to treat *Týr* as a later corruption of the Vedic *Dyaus*.

Wodan and Wednesday.

Comparison, no doubt, helps us in discovering the origin of the names of the Aryan gods, and as the ancient mythology of the Veda is more richly developed, or, at all events, has been more carefully preserved than that of any other Aryan race, we generally look upon the Sanskrit names as the most primitive. But historically this is a false position. We may, for instance, derive the name of the Teutonic god *Wodan* or *Odin* from a Sanskrit root which, if we replaced d by dh, would be *vadh*, to strike. From it we have the Vedic *vadh-ar*, thunderbolt, the Anglo-Saxon *weder*, storm and weather, and from it we may guess the original purport of *Wod-an* to have been the god of the thunderstorm, who still lives in the name of *Wednesday*, as *Wôdnes-dæg*. But there is no god in the Veda who could be represented as the exact prototype of *Wodan*, though there are several Vedic gods running parallel to him, just as the Gothic language runs parallel to Vedic Sanskrit.

High German.

Distinct from these three branches of the Teutonic class is the fourth, the *High German*, which as a rule

represents classical tenuis by media, classical aspirate by tenuis, and classical media by an aspirate. In other respects, however, High German is very close to Low German, so that many scholars now group Low and High German together as West-Teutonic, and Gothic and Scandinavian as East-Teutonic.

Old High German is known to us from about 700 to 1100; it is then succeeded by Middle High German from 1100 to 1500, and this by Modern High German spoken and written to the present day.

Celtic.

Besides the Low German which took possession of Britain in historic times, chiefly after the fall of the Roman dominion, another branch of Aryan speech overspread these isles in prehistoric times, the *Celtic*. The Celts too came from the Continent, where we find them migrating from East to West through Gaul and Spain, occasionally bursting into the Balkan and the Italian peninsulas, and sending out one colony as far as Galatia in Asia.

The Celtic class is divided into two branches, the *Cymric* and the *Goidelic*. The former comprises *Welsh*, the extinct *Cornish*, and the *Armorican* of Brittany; the *Goidelic*, the *Irish*, *Gaelic*, and *Manx*. There are besides the ancient inscriptions of Gaul which are sometimes treated as a third branch, the *Gallic*. Interesting as the Celtic languages are for etymological and grammatical purposes, their literature is recent, not going back beyond the eighth century A. D. Whatever there is of mythology and ancient religion has evidently passed through a Christian and Romanic filtering, and has to be used

therefore with extreme caution for comparative purposes[1].

Italic.

The next class of Aryan speech which has likewise reached the shores of the British isles, is the *Italic*. The literary language of Rome was but one of several dialects, elaborated by the Aryas when they settled in Italy. Besides the Latin we find the *Oscan* and the *Umbrian*, and several smaller dialects of which we possess monumental fragments. After reaching its classical culmination, Latin became the *lingua vulgaris* of the civilised portion of Western Europe, and developed new vulgar and afterwards literary languages in Italy, Gaul, Spain, Portugal, in the Grisons, and, by colonies, in Roumania. We have the earliest documents of French in the ninth century, of Provençal in the tenth, of Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese in the twelfth.

The language of England was touched twice by the waves of the Latin river, the first time through the Roman legions who took possession of Britain, the second time through the Norman conquerors, warriors of Teutonic extraction and Scandinavian blood, who after their conquest of Normandy had exchanged their Teutonic speech for that of Northern Gaul. They brought with them into England a Romanic language, Romanic thought, manners, and tastes, but little of Romanic blood. There may be some Celtic admixture in the Teutonic blood of England; but the grammar, the blood of the English language, has remained Teutonic throughout.

[1] See Professor Rhŷs, *Hibbert Lectures*, 1886.

Hellenic.

The next class is the *Hellenic*. And here we must guard against what was formerly a very common view, namely that the Aryas who came to people Greece and Italy were more closely related than the other scions of the Aryan family. Many scholars went so far as to suppose that the ancestors of the Greeks and Romans remained united for a time after they had become separated from the rest. There is no foundation, however, for this hypothesis, at least not so far as language is concerned. Greek shows greater similarity with Sanskrit than with Latin, Latin shows greater similarity with Celtic than with Greek. This is a point of great importance to us in our mythological and religious researches. In historical times the Latin language and the Roman mythology and religion have borrowed so much from Greek that scholars are apt to forget that the borrower was not altogether a pauper, that there was in fact a fully developed religion and mythology in Italy before the contact with Greece, and that it is this prehistoric phase of Italian life which is of chief interest to the student of ancient folk-lore.

The Hellenic class, in its four dialects, the *Doric*, *Aeolic*, *Attic*, and *Ionic*, is so well known that I need say no more about it in this place.

Slavonic.

We have still one more class of Aryan languages in Europe, the *Slavonic*, or, as I prefer to call it, the *Windic*. I prefer the name of *Windic*, because the oldest name under which the tribes speaking those

languages became known to us, is not *Slaves*, but *Winidae*.

This class is divided into three branches, the *Lettic*, the *South-East Slavonic*, and the *West Slavonic*.

The Lettic comprises (1) the *Lettish*, now spoken in Kurland and Livonia, the Baltic provinces of Russia. Its literature dates from the sixteenth century.

(2) The *Lithuanian*, spoken in Eastern Prussia and in Russia, by about a million of people. Its literature dates from 1547, of which date we possess a small catechism.

(3) The old *Prussian*, which became extinct in the seventeenth century, and left behind a few fragments only of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The *South-East Slavonic* comprises the old *Bulgarian*, in which we possess the translation of the Bible, of the ninth century, which is still used as the 'authorised version'; the *Slovenian*, *Servian*, and *Croatian* (sometimes comprehended under the common designation of *Illyrian*), with literary remains of the tenth century, and the *Russian*, the literary language of the Russian Empire.

The *West Slavonic* consists of the *Polish*, with a literature dating from the fourteenth century; the *Bohemian*, with a literature dating from the tenth century, and the dialects still spoken by Wends and Sorbs in Lusatia.

North-Western Division.

These five classes of Aryan speech which we have hitherto passed in review belong all to Europe, and form together what I call the North-Western division of the Aryan family.

Various attempts have been made to prove that before they became settled in their present seats, some of them remained together for a longer time than the rest, and therefore shared certain features in common which are absent in others. To me it seems that all these attempts have been in vain, and that all the evidence that is brought forward in support of what has been called a genealogical tree of the Aryan languages can be fully accounted for, if we admit that the dialectic varieties which afterwards grew into national languages existed before the Aryan Separation, that whatever forms seemed fittest to this or that clan survived, but that, after the family was once broken up, each dialect went its own way, unconcerned about its neighbours. Every other hypothesis creates as many difficulties as it is meant to solve. That geographical contact has nothing to do with grammatical similarity we see most clearly in Greek and Latin, which, though very close neighbours, are really as distinct as any other two Aryan languages. Celtic shows certain features in common with Latin, Latin with Greek, Teutonic with Lettic, but not one of these casual coincidences requires for its explanation more than the admission of that common dialectic fermentation which preceded here as elsewhere the formation of national languages.

South-Eastern Branch.

It is useful, however, particularly for comparative purposes, to distinguish between those five branches which together form the North-Western division of the Aryan family, and the *South-Eastern* division which consists of the languages of India and Persia. There

is one language which is now supposed to hold an intermediate position between these two divisions, the *Armenian*, but its exact relationship is still a matter of controversy.

Why this division into a North-Western and South-Eastern branch is useful historically, we shall see when we come to consider the question of what intellectual level had been reached by the Aryan family before they separated. As it is quite clear that in historical times no exchange took place between the Aryas who travelled in a South-Eastern direction to Persia and India, and those who had followed a North-Western direction towards Europe, every word which they share in common, and particularly all words connected with mythology and religion, can be claimed as the common property of the whole Aryan race before its first dispersion.

The languages belonging to this South-Eastern division are of special interest to us, as the principal sacred books are composed in them. Europe has never produced a religion. All religions have their cradle in the East, and the languages of India and Persia have become the vehicles of three of the greatest religions of the world, *Brahmanism*, *Buddhism*, in its three divisions of Southern Buddhism, Northern Buddhism, and *Gainism*, and *Zoroastrianism*. These languages, therefore, will require more careful consideration.

Indic Class. Vedic Hymns.

Let us begin with India. The oldest monument of Indian speech is the *Veda*. It is curious that wherever we have sacred books, they represent to us the oldest language of the country. It is so in India, it

is the same in Persia, in China, in Palestine, and very nearly so in Arabia. How the Veda, which is referred to about 1500 B.C., was preserved to the present day is a kind of fairy story which I must pass by, as we are at present concerned with the history of the language only; but we shall have to consider it when we come to examine the fourth class of our materials for studying Natural Religion, viz. the Sacred Books.

The language of the Veda must of course have been at one time the spoken language of those who composed the Vedic hymns, probably in the North-West of India. But in the history of India, that language is always the sacred language, and it possesses words, grammatical forms, and syntactical constructions, unknown in later Sanskrit.

Brâhmaṇas.

The next stage of this language is still Vedic, but whereas the Vedic hymns are all in metre, the next stage shows us the prose of the Brâhmaṇas, works intended for the elucidation of the Vedic hymns and the Vedic sacrifices. The Sanskrit of these Brâhmaṇas is more settled and regular than that of the hymns, but it still represents a period of language prior to that which is presupposed by the grammar of Pâṇini, or, what used to be called, classical Sanskrit.

Sûtras.

The next phase of Sanskrit is that of the *Sûtras*, which is likewise in some points different from the Sanskrit which Pâṇini would consider as regular, but approaches to it so closely that the chronological interval separating the two can only have been very small.

The whole of this literature, which has been pre-

served to us in its three stages, is exclusively a priestly literature, and what seems at first sight almost incredible, the whole of it was preserved for a long time by oral tradition only. The hymns must at a very early time have become the subject of the most careful study. Not only every word, but every letter and every accent were settled in the teaching of the schools, and the only marvel is that so many irregular forms should have escaped the levelling influence of teachers from generation to generation. Still, with all its irregularities, the Vedic language, as we know it, has clearly passed through a grammatical discipline, and we actually possess, dating from the third or the Sûtra period, a number of treatises, the so-called Prâtisâkhyas, which show us with what extraordinary minuteness the hymns of the Veda had been analysed.

Pâṇinean Sanskrit.

With the Sûtras this stream of Vedic language comes to an end. The famous grammar of Pâṇini, which is generally referred to the fourth century B.C., treats the Vedic Sanskrit as already exceptional and antiquated, and presupposes a language and a literature of a different character.

We must never forget that in ancient times literature gives us generally specimens of one dialect only, and that this literary dialect, being lifted out of the living stream of language, becomes what is called classical, that is stagnant and dead. The other non-literary dialects withdraw themselves from our observation, but if after a time a new language rises to the surface and brings with it a new liter-

ature, that new language is always a sister dialect rather, and not a direct descendant of the old classical language. The language for which Pâṇini's rules are intended is not Vedic Sanskrit, but a Sanskrit nevertheless closely allied to it. From Pâṇini's time to the present day that Sanskrit, as a new literary language, has remained perfectly stationary, for the simple reason that any infraction of Pâṇini's rules, any deviation from the classical type as fixed by him, would have been considered, and is considered to the present day, a grammatical blunder.

Inscriptions of Piyadasi, Third Century B.C.

If we only knew the language of India in these two channels, the Vedic and the Pâṇinean, all would be intelligible. But the marvel is that when for the first time we come across an historical specimen of the spoken language of India, that language is totally different. The first truly historical documents in India are the inscriptions of Piyadasi or Asoka in the middle of the third century B. C. These inscriptions we have now before us as they were written at the time. They contain edicts intended to be understood by the people, and we are safe in supposing that the language in which they are composed must have been, if read out, intelligible to the people.

I cannot describe the state of that language better than by representing it to you as a spoken vulgar dialect of Sanskrit, just as Italian was a spoken vulgar dialect of Latin. Thus, while the Vedic and the Pâṇinean Sanskrit present to us two old dialects, regulated by careful grammatical study and reserved

for literary purposes, these inscriptions of the third century B.C. represent to us the living dialects of the people, reduced by phonetic wear and tear to a mere ghost of their former self.

And that is not all. While the Sanskrit of the Veda as well as the Sanskrit of Pâ*n*ini is rendered uniform by rule, the language, as recorded in these inscriptions, allows an unbounded variety, such as would not be tolerated in any purely literary language. We have here the language of India as it was actually spoken in the third century B. C., and its discovery was no small surprise to the believers in one uniform classical Sanskrit.

Buddhist Sanskrit.

Nor is this all. While Brahmanism disdained to use any language but Sanskrit for religious subjects, Buddhism, which was at that time the rising and growing religion of India, availed itself of the spoken dialects in order to influence the great masses of the people; and so we find that one collection of the sacred writings of the Buddhists, commonly called the *Northern*, is composed in an irregular dialect, closely resembling the dialect of Asoka's inscriptions, while the second collection, commonly called the *Southern*, is written in another vulgar dialect, but essentially differing from the former by having evidently received a more careful grammatical polish. The former dialect is generally called the *Gâthâ dialect*, or *Mixed Sanskrit*, the latter is called *Pâli*, and may be called *Mâgadhî*, though it ought not to be confused with the later Prâkrit dialect of the same name. These two dialects we can fix his-

torically, at least so far that we may assign to the literature, composed in the Gâthâ dialect, a date anterior to the Christian era, because we have Chinese translations of some of the books of the Northern canon about that time. The text of the Southern canon, after having been handed down by word of mouth, was reduced to writing in 88 B.C.[1] What chiefly distinguishes the Southern Pâli text from the Northern Gâthâ text is that the former has clearly undergone a strict grammatical revision, while the latter has not.

Renaissance of Sanskrit Literature.

After the end of the first century A.D., Sanskrit, that is to say, the Pâninean Sanskrit, comes more and more to the front, and we see it used for the ordinary purposes of life, and later on for public inscriptions. What we generally understand by Sanskrit literature begins about 400 A.D., and to about the same period we may refer the grammatical cultivation of the Prâkrit dialects.

Prâkrit.

These Prâkrit dialects are probably the lineal descendants of the ungrammatical dialects, preserved to us in the inscriptions of Asoka, and again in some of the texts of the Northern Buddhist canon. But whereas at that time they were like wild-growing plants, they have now been trimmed and shorn and regulated by strict grammatical rules, after the pattern of Pânini's grammar. In that form they are used in the Sanskrit plays, much in the same manner

[1] Vinaya-pitaka, in *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xiii, p. xxxv.

as the Italian dialects were used in the *Comedia delle arte*, where the Doctor always speaks Bolognese, *Arlechino* Bergamese, *Pantaleone* Venetian, while the pure Tuscan or Roman was reserved for the *Amorosos* and *Inamoratas*[1].

Vernaculars.

But again, while the classical Sanskrit and the now equally classical Prâkrit remained henceforth stationary, the old springs of language were not stopped, but poured on chiefly in two great channels, the *Western* and the *Eastern*, the former represented in our time by Sindhî, Gujarâtî, Panjâbî, and Western Hindî, the Eastern by Bihârî, Bengâlî, Uriyâ, and Asâmî. The Nepâlî in the North shows more affinity with the Western, the Marâthî in the South with the Eastern division.

Sacred Books.

It is necessary to keep this outline of the growth and the ramification of language clearly before our mind, for the Sacred Books with which we shall deal have grown, as it were, on the branches of this tree of speech. We have the hymns of the Veda, the Brâhma*n*as, and Sûtras preserved to us in Vedic Sanskrit. We have the Law Book of Manu and the Purâ*n*as composed in literary Sanskrit, according to Pâ*n*ini's pattern. We have the Southern canon of Buddhism in Pâli, the Aṅgas of the *G*ainas in old Mahârâsh*t*rî, and the Northern canon of the Buddhists in ungrammatical Prâkrit. We shall see that there is even a certain parallelism between the

[1] Cf. M. M., On Bengali, in Report of the British Association for 1847, p. 322.

growth of language and the growth of religion, and that without a knowledge of the historical development of the language many points in the history of the religions of India would remain unintelligible.

Iranic Class.

The last class of the Aryan family which we have still to examine is the *Iranic*. Here we find much the same phenomena as in India. The most ancient specimen of the language is found in the sacred book of Persia, the Avesta. It is called Zend, which, though it is an entire misnomer, will probably remain the recognised name. It is supposed with considerable probability that this ancient dialect was that of Media rather than of Persia.

Cuneiform Persian Inscriptions.

When, however, we get the first glimpse of the language of Persia in contemporary documents, I mean in the cuneiform inscriptions of Cyrus, Darius, and Xerxes, we find there a language closely allied to that of the sacred writings of Zoroaster, yet different from it. These inscriptions cover the time of the Achaemenian dynasty from about 500 to 336 B.C.

Pehlevi.

Then follows a break of more than five centuries; but when we meet again with a new literature at the time of the Sassanian dynasty in the first half of the third century A.D., the language, then called *Pehlevi*, is a decayed Persian, written no longer in cuneiform letters, but in a Semitic alphabet and syllabary. The Pehlevi literature, chiefly concerned with the explanation of the Avesta and with religious questions, lasts

till about 900 A.D. With 1000 A.D. begins the modern Persian, as we have it in its purity in the great epic of Firdusi, the *Shâhnâmeh*, while in later times it becomes more and more mixed with Arabic words through the influence of the Mohammedan religion.

These are the principal languages of the Aryan family, and those which are of special interest to us in the study of religion. There are some other languages, such as *Armenian* and *Ossetian* in Asia, and *Albanian* in Europe, which are clearly of Aryan descent, but which have not yet been referred with perfect precision to any of the great classes of that family. Modern Albanian is supposed to represent the ancient Illyrian. Armenian may constitute a language by itself, more closely related, as shown by Hübschmann, to the North-Western than to the South-Eastern division.

Bask and Etruscan.

Before we leave the Aryan family, we should still mention two languages, not Aryan in character, but surrounded on all sides by people of Aryan speech, and well-nigh absorbed by them, those of the Basks and the Etruscans.

The Basks, interesting as they are for linguistic purposes, yield us little information with regard to what their ancient religion may have been. The Etruscans, on the contrary, have left us ample materials in monuments and inscriptions, though it must be confessed that not until a really safe key to their language has been discovered, will there be any chance of our understanding the true character of their religion.

Semitic Family.

Quite independent of this enormous stream of language which dominates India, Persia, Armenia and nearly the whole of Europe, there is another stream, the *Semitic*, running in a bed of its own from the very beginning, and feeding two, if not three of the great religions of the world, that of the Jews, that of the Christians, and that of the Mohammedans.

The Semitic family may be divided into three branches, the *Aramaic*, the *Hebraic* and the *Arabic*, or into two, the Northern, comprising the *Aramaic* and *Hebraic*, and the Southern, the *Arabic*.

Aramaic.

The *Aramaic* comprises the ancient language of Assyria and Babylon, so far as it has been discovered and deciphered in the cuneiform inscriptions. The grammatical structure of this ancient language is not yet sufficiently made out to enable scholars to trace its exact relation to the later Aramaic. Geographically, however, the ancient language of Mesopotamia may for the present be classed as Aramaic. If some of these cuneiform inscriptions go back, as some scholars maintain, to 4000 B.C., they would represent the oldest remnants of Semitic speech. And if that Semitic literature was preceded, as seems very generally admitted, by another civilisation, not Semitic, and generally called *Sumero-Accadian*, we should get an insight into a past more distant than even that which is claimed for Egypt and China. It may be so, but even though chronologically the religious ideas conveyed to us by the sacred hymns of Babylon should prove to be so much earlier than those of any of

the Aryan races, I must say at once that they appear to me much more advanced, much more modern in point of civilisation. They presuppose towns, temples, idols, a knowledge of metals and all kinds of precious stones, familiarity with writing, and a number of abstract ideas which we should look for in vain in the Vedic hymns. Linguistically also there is little in these inscriptions which we should call much more primitive than what we see in the grammatical structure of Syriac, Arabic, or Hebrew. Many difficulties have here still to be cleared up. An important mine however for religious studies has no doubt been opened there, and several of the antecedents of Hebrew tradition have already been discovered in the cuneiform literature of Babylon. If, as we read, Abraham came from Ur of the Chaldees, his language ought to have been akin to that of the cuneiform inscriptions. But his name and all connected with him passed in later times through the channel of a different language, which we now call Hebrew. The date at which whatever was known of him was reduced to writing in that form in which we now possess it is still uncertain, but at all events much later than was formerly supposed.

Chaldee and Syriac.

In historical times we find Aramaic spoken in the kingdoms of Babylon and Assyria, and spreading thence into Syria and Palestine. Owing to the political and literary ascendancy of these kingdoms, Aramaic seems for a time to have been a kind of *lingua franca* extending its influence to Persia, Syria, Asia Minor, Egypt, and even to Arabia.

It has been usual to distinguish between the Ara-

maic as used by the Jews, and the Aramaic as used in later times by Christian writers, the former being called *Chaldee*, the latter *Syriac*. It may be true that the name Chaldee owes its origin to the mistaken notion of its having been introduced into Palestine by the Jews returning from the Babylonian captivity. But the name has been too long in possession to make it advisable to replace it by a new name, such as *Western Aramaic*.

This Jewish *Chaldee* shows itself first in some of the books of the Old Testament, such as Ezra and Daniel. Afterwards we find it in the *Targums* or Chaldee translations of the Pentateuch (Onkelos) and the Prophets (Jonathan), which were read in the Synagogues long before they were finally collected in about the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. The Jerusalem Targums and the Jerusalem Talmud represent the Chaldee as spoken at that time by the Jews in Jerusalem and in Galilee. Christ and his disciples must have employed the same Aramaic dialect, though they also used Greek in addressing the people at large. The conquests of the Arabs and the spreading of their language interfered with the literary cultivation of Chaldee as early as the seventh century; but it continued to be employed by some Jewish writers down to the tenth century.

The *Samaritans* translated the Pentateuch into their own Aramaic dialect, which differs but little from that of the Jews.

The *Mandaeans* also, a somewhat mixed Christian sect in Babylonia, spoke and wrote a Chaldee dialect, which is preserved in their writings and in the jargon of a few surviving members of that sect.

Syriac, though spoken long before the rise of Christianity, owes its literary cultivation chiefly to Christian writers. The Old and New Testaments were translated into Syriac (the Peshito) in the second century, and became the recognised text in the school of Edessa and elsewhere. A large literature accumulated from the third to the seventh century, and extended its influence to Persia and the Eastern Roman Empire. The Arabic conquests, however, put an end to the literary cultivation of this language also, though it lived on both as a written and spoken dialect to the twelfth century, and afterwards, as a language of the learned, to the present day.

The *Neo-Syriac* dialects, still spoken in some parts of Mesopotamia, chiefly by Nestorian Christians in the neighbourhood of Mosul, and in Kurdistan as far as Lake Urmia, are not directly derived from the literary Syriac, but represent remnants of the spoken Aramaic. One of these dialects has lately received some literary cultivation through the exertions of Christian missionaries.

Hebraic.

The second branch, the *Hebraic*, comprises *Phenician* and *Carthaginian*, as known to us from inscriptions dating from about 600 B.C., and the *Hebrew* of the Old Testament.

The Moabites spoke Hebrew, as may be seen from the language of the inscription of King Mesha, about 900 B.C. The Philistines also seem to have spoken the same language, though, it may be, with dialectic varieties. About the time of the Maccabees, Hebrew and its cognate dialects ceased to be spoken by the people at large, though Hebrew remained the language

of the learned long after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. Even at present the Jews employ an artificial and corrupt Hebrew for literary discussions and among themselves.

Arabic.

The third branch, the *Arabic*, has its home in the Arabian peninsula, where it is still spoken by the bulk of the inhabitants, and from whence it spread over Asia, Africa, and Europe at the time of the Mohammedan conquests. There was a popular Arabic literature long before Mohammed (Mo'allakât), and there are inscriptions in the north of the Hijâz, commonly called *Thamudic*, which are supposed to be of an ante-Christian date. Arabic inscriptions continue to be found, attesting the use of Arabic as a cultivated language, long before the age of Mohammed. The trilingual inscription of Zabad (Aramaic, Arabic, Greek) dates from 513 A. D.; a bilingual inscription of Harran (Arabic and Greek) from 568 A. D. A new impulse was given to the literary life of the Arabs by the new religion preached by Mohammed and his successors. The language of the Qur'ân became a new type of literary excellence by the side of the ancient Bedouin poetry. In the second century after the Hejra grammatical studies fixed the rules of classical Arabic permanently, and after 1200 years the Qur'ân is still read and understood by all educated Arabs. The spoken Arabic, however, differs dialectically in Egypt, Algeria, Syria, and Arabia. One Arabic dialect continues to be spoken in Malta.

Sabaean or Himyaritic.

In the South of the Arabian peninsula there existed

an ancient *Sabaean* civilisation, remnants of which have been discovered in colossal monuments and in numerous inscriptions, written in a peculiar alphabet, generally called Himyaritic. Their age is doubtful, but some of them are supposed to date from before our era and to extend to the fourth century A.D. It is possible to distinguish traces of different dialects in these Sabaean inscriptions, but they are all closely connected with Arabic. The Sabaean language was probably spoken in the South of the Arabian peninsula till the advent of Mohammedanism, which made Arabia the language of the whole of Yemen.

Ethiopic.

In very early times a colony from Arabia, or, more correctly, from Sabaea, seems to have crossed to Africa. Here, south of Egypt and Nubia, an ancient and very primitive Semitic dialect, closely allied to Sabaean and Arabic, has maintained itself to the present day, the *Ethiopic* or *Abyssinian*, or *Geez*. We have translations of the Bible in Ethiopic, dating from the third or fourth century. Other works followed, all of a theological character.

There are inscriptions also in ancient Ethiopic, dating from the days of the kingdom of Axum, which have been referred to 350, and 500 A.D.

This ancient Ethiopic ceased to be spoken in the ninth century, but it remained in use as a literary language for a long time.

Beginning with the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a new language appears, the *Amharic*. In it the Semitic type has been intensely modified, probably owing to the fact that the tribes who spoke it were of Hamitic

origin. It is a spreading language, and has given rise in modern times to a new literature.

Other dialects, such as *Tigré*, *Ehkili*, and *Harrari*, so called from the localities in which they are spoken, have not yet been sufficiently explored to enable Semitic scholars to pronounce an opinion whether they are varieties of Amharic, or representatives of more ancient independent dialects [1].

The family likeness of the Semitic is quite as strong as that of the Aryan languages, nay even stronger. Their phonetic character is marked by the preponderance of guttural sounds, their etymological character by the triliteral form of most of the roots, and the manner in which these roots are modified by pronominal suffixes and prefixes; their grammatical character by the fixity of the vowels for expressing the principal modifications of meaning, a fixity which made it possible to dispense with writing the vowel signs. These characteristic features are so strongly developed that they render it quite impossible to imagine that a Semitic language could ever have sprung from an Aryan or an Aryan from a Semitic. Whether both could have sprung from a common source is a question that has often been asked, and has generally been answered according to personal predilections. Most scholars, I believe, would admit that it could not be shown that a common origin in far distant times is altogether impossible. But the evidence both for and against is by necessity so intangible and evanescent that it does not come within the sphere of practical linguistics.

[1] The latest and best account of the Semitic languages is given by Nöldeke in the *Cyclop. Britannica*.

LECTURE XII.

PRINCIPLES OF CLASSIFICATION.

Languages not Aryan and not Semitic.

THE two families of language which we have hitherto examined, the Aryan and Semitic, are the most important to the student of religion. Not only are the principal Sacred Books of the East, with the exception of those of China, composed in Sanskrit, Pâli, Prakrit, Zend, Pehlevi, Hebrew, Greek, and Arabic, but the religious and mythological phraseology of the leading nations of Europe—Greeks, Romans, Germans, Slaves and Celts—are all embodied in Aryan and Semitic speech. It was necessary therefore to give a fuller account of these two families, so as to avoid the necessity of explaining again and again the linguistic evidence on which so much in the study of the great religions of the world depends.

With regard to the remaining families of speech, however, it will be sufficient if I place before you a short outline only. Though outside the pale of the Aryan and Semitic languages the progress of Comparative Philology has been very slow, still we know in many cases which languages in Asia, Africa, Polynesia and America are related and which are not, and to know this is of course of the greatest help in the study of religion. When we meet with the same religious ideas or religious customs in distant parts of the world, the question whether they are the result of

our universal human nature or whether they have been transferred from one race to another, depends chiefly on the question whether there is a more or less distant relationship between the languages. If we know that the languages spoken on the East-coast of Africa from several degrees north of the equator to nearly the Cape belong to one and the same strongly marked family, that of the so-called Bântu languages, coincidences between the religious and mythological ideas of the races speaking these languages admit of an historical interpretation, and need not be accepted as the simple result of our common human faculties. If it could be proved that the Hottentots, the southern neighbours of these Bântu races, were really, as maintained by Lepsius and others, emigrants from Egypt, this again would throw a new light on certain coincidences in their customs and those of the ancient Egyptians.

The Hurons[1] of the Anderdon reserve, visited by Mr. Horatio Hale in 1872 and 1874, tell the story of the earth being sustained by a tortoise, yet no one would think that they borrowed it from India. They likewise know of two supernatural beings who were to prepare the world to be the abode of man. The one was good, the other bad. The bad brother created monstrous creatures, the good brother innocent and useful animals, and though he could not destroy the evil animals altogether, he reduced them in size, so that man would be able to master them. Whatever beneficent work the good brother accomplished was counteracted by the bad brother. At last the two brothers fought, the evil spirit was overcome by

[1] Horatio Hale in *Journal of American Folklore*, vol. i, p. 180.

the good, but retired to the West where, as he declared, all men would go after death. All this might be taken from the Avesta; yet though the two brothers are actually styled by the Hurons the 'Good Mind' and the 'Bad Mind' (in Zend, Vañheus Mainyus, Añrô Mainyus), no one would suppose that the Hurons borrowed from Zoroaster or Zoroaster from the Hurons.

It is essential also that students of religion and mythology should possess a general knowledge of the grammatical character of the languages, for it has been clearly shown that such peculiarities as, for instance, the distinction of masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns, have been productive of a whole class of legends which are absent when the idea of gender has not been realised in language. My own conviction has always been that a truly scientific study of religion and mythology is impossible unless we know the language which forms the soil from which religion and mythology spring[1]. All attempts therefore to study the religions, particularly of uncivilised tribes, whose dialects are but little known and whose linguistic affinities with other tribes are not yet clearly established, must be looked upon for the present as provisional only. These studies, though full of promise, are at the same time full of danger also.

Morphological Classification of Languages.

It may be well to keep in mind that languages may be and have been classified, not only genealogically,

[1] Professor Tiele, one of the highest authorities on Comparative Theology, agrees with me as to the intimate relationship between language, religion, and nationality. But he very wisely puts in a reservation, namely that, 'the farther history advances, the more does religion become independent of both language and nationality.'

but morphologically also, and that a morphological similarity between certain languages, though it does in no way prove their common descent, indicates a common bent in the thoughts of those who speak them. I have already mentioned the grammatical distinction of gender as an important element in the formation of mythology and religion. Other elements of the same kind are the manner in which certain languages keep the radical portion of every word from phonetic corruption, while others allow it to become absorbed and almost lost. Words which display their radical elements retain a certain perspicuity, and are less liable therefore to mythological misunderstandings. Thus the Semitic languages in which the triliteral skeleton is generally clearly discernible in every word have produced less of poetical mythology than the Aryan languages. The power of forming abstract nouns, of employing compound words, of using impersonal verbs, has often to be appealed to in the interpretation of mythological and religious modes of expression.

I saw a curious instance of the almost unconscious influence which peculiarities of language may exercise on the expression of religious dogma in the case of a Mohawk who came to Oxford to study medicine, and who gave me lessons in his native language. In that language it is impossible to say the father, or the son; we must always say my, thy, or his father or son. Thus we cannot say 'I believe in God, the father,' but we must say, 'I believe in God, our father.' Again, instead of saying 'I believe in God, the son,' we have to say, 'I believe in God, his son.' But when we come to say 'I believe in God, the Holy

Ghost,' we cannot, as in English, leave the question of the procession of the Spirit from the father, or from the father and the son, an open one. We must say, either 'his Holy Ghost,' or 'their Holy Ghost.' That is to say, language would force a Mohawk to declare himself for the single or double procession, a question which most of us may leave to be settled by theologians by profession.

Genealogical as different from Morphological Classification.

The Aryan and Semitic languages are held together, as we saw, by the closest ties of a real genealogical relationship. They both presuppose the existence of a finished system of grammar, previous to the first divergence of their dialects. Their history is from the very beginning a history of decay rather than of growth, and hence the unmistakeable family-likeness which pervades every one even of their latest descendants. The languages of the Sepoy and that of the English soldier are, in one sense, one and the same language. They are both built up of materials which were definitely shaped before the Teutonic and Indic branches separated. No new root has been added to either since their first separation; and the grammatical forms which are of more modern growth in English or Hindustani are, if closely examined, new combinations only of elements which existed from the beginning in all the Aryan dialects. In the termination of the English *he is*, and in the inaudible termination of the French *il est*, we recognise the result of an act performed before the first separation of the Aryan family, the combination of the predicative root AS with the demonstrative element ta, or ti; an act per-

formed once for all, and continuing to be felt to the present day.

It was the custom of Nebuchadnezzar to have his name stamped on every brick that was used during his reign in erecting his colossal palaces. Those palaces fell to ruins, but from the ruins the ancient materials were carried away for building new cities; and, on examining the bricks in the walls of the modern city of Bagdad on the borders of the Tigris, travellers have discovered on every one the clear traces of that royal signature. It is the same if we examine the structure of modern languages. They too were built up with the materials taken from the ruins of the ancient languages, and every word, if properly examined, displays the royal stamp impressed upon it from the first by the founders of the Aryan and the Semitic empires of speech.

Degrees of Relationship.

The relationship of languages, however, is not always so close. Languages may diverge before their grammatical system has become fixed and hardened by tradition or literary culture; and in that case they cannot be expected to show the same marked features of a common descent, as, for instance, the Neo-Latin dialects, French, Italian, and Spanish.

They may have much in common, but they will likewise display an aftergrowth in words and grammatical forms peculiar to each dialect. With regard to words, for instance, we see that even languages so intimately related to each other as the six Romanic dialects, diverged in some of the commonest expressions. Instead of the Latin word *frater*, the French

frère, we find in Spanish *hermano*. There was a very good reason for this change. The Latin word *frater*, changed into *fray* and *frayle*, had been applied to express a brother, in the sense of a friar. It was felt inconvenient that the same word should express two ideas which it was sometimes necessary to distinguish, and therefore, by a kind of natural elimination, *frater* was given up as the name of brother in Spanish, and replaced from the dialectical stores of Latin by *germanus*. In the same manner the Latin word for shepherd, *pastor*, was so constantly applied to the shepherd of the souls, or the clergyman, *le pasteur*, that a new word was wanted for the real shepherd. Thus *berbicarius*, from *berbex* or *vervex*, a wether, was used instead of *pastor*, and changed into the French *berger*. Instead of the Spanish *enfermo*, ill, we find in French *malade*, in Italian *malato*. Languages so closely related as Greek and Latin have fixed on different expressions for son, daughter, brother, woman, man, sky, earth, moon, hand, mouth, tree, bird, &c.[1] That is to say, out of a large number of synonymes which were supplied by the numerous dialects of the Aryan family, the Greeks perpetuated one, the Romans another. It is clear that when the working of this principle of natural selection is allowed to extend more widely, languages, though proceeding from the same source, may in time acquire a totally different nomenclature for the commonest objects. The number of real synonymes is frequently exaggerated, and if we are told that in Icelandic, for instance, there are 120 names for island, or in Arabic 500 names for lion[2],

[1] See *Letter on the Turanian Languages*, p. 62.
[2] Renan, *Histoire des Langues sémitiques*, p. 137

and 1000 names for sword[1], many of these are no doubt purely poetical. But even where there are in a language only four or five names for the same objects, it is clear that four languages might be derived from it, each in appearance quite distinct from the rest[2].

The same applies to grammar. When the Romanic languages, for instance, formed their new future by placing the auxiliary verb *habere*, to have, after the infinitive, it was quite open to any one of them to fix upon some other expedient for expressing the future. The French might have chosen *je vais dire* or *je dir-vais* (I wade to say) instead of *je dir-ai*, and in this case the future in French would have been totally distinct from the future in Italian. If such changes are possible in literary languages of such long standing as French and Italian, we must be prepared for a great deal more in languages which, as I said, diverged before any definite settlement had taken place, either in their grammar or their dictionary. If we were to expect in them the definite criteria of a genealogical relationship which unites the members of the Aryan and Semitic families of speech, we should necessarily be disappointed. Such criteria could hardly be expected to exist in these languages.

But there are criteria for determining even these more distant degrees of relationship in the vast realm of speech; and they are sufficient at least to arrest for the present the hasty conclusions of those who would deny the possibility of a common origin of any languages more removed from each other than French and

[1] Pococke, *Notes to Abulfaragius*, p. 153; Stoddart, *Glossology*, p. 352. See *infra*, p. 438.

[2] See Terrien Poncel, *Du Language*, p. 213.

Italian, Sanskrit and Greek, Hebrew and Arabic. This will be more clearly seen after we have examined the principles of what I call the *Morphological Classification* of human speech.

Morphological Classification.

As all languages, so far as we can judge at present, can be reduced in the end to roots, predicative and demonstrative, it is clear that, according to the manner in which roots are put together, we may expect to find three kinds of languages, or three stages in the gradual formation of speech.

1. Roots may be used as words, each root preserving its full independence.

2. Two roots may be joined together to form words, and in these compounds one root may lose its independence.

3. Two roots may be joined together to form words, and in these compounds both roots may lose their independence.

What applies to two roots, applies to three or four or more. The principle is the same, though it would lead to a more varied subdivision.

Radical Stage.

The first stage, in which each root preserves its independence, and in which there is no formal distinction between a root and a word, I call the *Radical Stage*. Languages while belonging to this first or Radical Stage have sometimes been called *Monosyllabic* or *Isolating*.

Terminational Stage.

The second stage, in which two or more roots coalesce to form a word, the one retaining its radical

independence, the other sinking down to a mere termination, I call the *Terminational Stage*. The languages belonging to it have generally been called *agglutinative*, from *gluten*, glue.

Inflectional Stage.

The third stage, in which roots coalesce so that neither the one nor the other retains its substantive independence, I call the *Inflectional Stage*. The languages belonging to it have sometimes been distinguished by the name of *amalgamating* or *organic*.

The first stage excludes phonetic corruption altogether.

The second stage excludes phonetic corruption in the principal root, but allows it in the secondary or determinative elements.

The third stage allows phonetic corruption both in the principal root and in the terminations.

Transitions from one stage to another.

It is perfectly true that few languages only, if we can trace their history during any length of time, remain stationary in one of these stages. Even Chinese, as has been shown by Dr. Edkins, exhibits in its modern dialects traces of incipient agglutination, if not of inflection. The Ugric languages show the most decided traces of phonetic corruption[1], and in consequence clear tendencies toward inflexion, while the modern Aryan languages, such as French and English, avail themselves of agglutinative expedients for contriving

[1] Thus, to quote Professor Hunfalvy, *sydām*, heart, in Finnish has been changed to *syŏm*, in Vogul. to *sim*, in Hungarian to *szív* and *szü*. The Ostjak. *jĭgot*, bow, is *jaut* and *jajt* in Vogul., *joui-se* in Finnish, *ij* and *iv* in Hungarian. The Ostjak. *kauh*, *kouh* or *keu*, stone, is *kav* or *kāv* in Vogul., *kivi* in Finnish, *kö* in Hungarian.

new grammatical forms. So far I quite agree with Professor Hunfalvy, who has so strongly protested against substituting a morphological for a genealogical classification of languages. Such a substitution is impossible, and was never contemplated. The two classifications are both useful, each for its own purposes, but the genealogical classification should always be considered the more important.

Nor was it even supposed that the two classifications could run parallel. We saw how an isolating language, like Chinese, might in the end produce inflectional forms, and I hold as strongly as ever that every inflectional language must have passed through an agglutinative stage, and that this agglutination is always preceded by the isolating stage.

It should be quite clearly understood therefore that morphological similarity is no proof whatever of real historical relationship. It may indicate such relationship, but a very different kind of evidence is required in addition, to establish the common descent of languages standing on the same morphological stage. This may require some further illustration.

Chinese.

In the first morphological stage every word can be called a root, before it is used as part of a sentence. This stage is best represented by Chinese, and to a certain extent by ancient Egyptian. There is no formal distinction in ancient Chinese between a noun, a verb, an adjective, an adverb, and a preposition. The same root, according to its position in a sentence, may be employed to convey the meaning of great, greatness, greatly, to grow, and to be great. All depends on

position, not on grammatical terminations. Thus *ngò tà ni* means 'I beat thee,' and *ni tà ngò* would mean 'thou beatest me.' *Ngŏ ǧin* means 'a bad man;' *ǧin ngŏ* would mean 'the man is bad.'

When we say in Latin *baculo*, with a stick, we should have to say in Chinese *ŷ ćáng*[1]. Here *ŷ* might be taken for a mere preposition, like the English *with*. But in Chinese this *ŷ* is a root; it is the same word which, if used as a verb, would mean 'to employ.' Therefore in Chinese *ŷ ćáng* means literally 'employ stick.' Or again, where we say in English *at home*, or in Latin *domi*, the Chinese say *ùŏ-li*, *ùŏ* meaning *house*, and *li* originally *inside*[2]. The name for *day* in modern Chinese is *ǧi-tse*, which meant originally *son of the sun*[3], or, connected with the sun.

As long as every word, or part of a word, is felt to express its own radical meaning, a language belongs to the first or radical stage. As soon as such words as *tse* in *ǧi-tse*, day, *li* in *ùŏ-li*, at home, or *ŷ* in *ŷ-ćáng*, with the stick, lose their etymological meaning and become mere signs of derivation or of case, language enters into the second or terminational stage. And this transition from one class into another does not, as Professor Hunfalvy supposes, vitiate our division. On the contrary, it confirms it from an historical point of view.

In some respects the ancient language of Egypt, as revealed to us in the earliest hieroglyphic inscriptions,

[1] Endlicher, *Chinesische Grammatik*, s. 223. [2] *Ibid.*, s. 339.

[3] In this word *tse* (tseu) does not signify *son*; it is an addition of frequent occurrence after nouns, adjectives, and verbs. Thus, *lao*, old, + *tseu* is father; *neï*, the interior, + *tseu* is wife; *hiang*, scent, + *tseu* is clove; *hoa*, to beg, + *tseu*, a mendicant; *hi*, to act, + *tseu*, an actor.—Stanislas Julien.

may be classed with Chinese. But the points of similarity are chiefly negative. They arise from the absence of grammatical differentiation and articulation, and from the possibility in consequence of the same word or root being used as a substantive, adjective, verb, or adverb. But there is no trace of any material relationship between the two languages.

Chinese stands by itself as a language which has changed very little since we know it in its most ancient literary records. Some scholars maintain that even in its earliest stage it shows signs of previous phonetic corruption. This may be so, and it seems confirmed by the evidence of local dialects. But we can hardly imagine that its grammatical simplicity, or rather its freedom from all grammar, in our sense of the word, could be due, as in the case of English, to a long-continued process of elimination of useless elements. Here we must wait for the results of further researches. The age claimed for the ancient Chinese literature seems to me as yet unsupported by any such evidence as would carry conviction to a student of Greek, Latin, or Sanskrit literature. Even if we admit that much of the ancient literature which was systematically destroyed by the Emperor of *Khin*, B.C. 213, may have been recovered from oral tradition and scattered MSS., we cannot claim for the works of Confucius and Lao-ʒze an earlier date than that of their compilers. They may contain much older materials, but they give them to us as understood in the sixth century B.C., and they too may not altogether have escaped the effects of the burning of books under the Emperor of *Khin*.

Ural-Altaic Languages.

West of China there stretches a cluster of languages which are on the point of leaving or have left the isolating stage, which show the development of agglutination in high perfection, and in some instances rise to the level of inflectional grammar. They are called *Ural-Altaic* or *Ugro-Tataric*. In one of my earliest essays, 'A Letter on the Turanian Languages,' 1854, I proposed to comprehend these languages under the name of *Turanian*. I went even further, and distinguished them as *North-Turanian*, in opposition to what in my youth I ventured to call the *South-Turanian* languages, namely the *Tamulic*, *Taic*, *Gangetic*, *Lohitic*, and *Malaic*. During the last thirty years, however, the principles of the Science of Language have been worked out with so much greater exactness, and the study of some of these languages has made such rapid progress, that I should not venture at present to suggest such wide generalisations, at all events so far as the *Tamulic*, *Taic*, *Gangetic*, *Lohitic*, and *Malaic* languages are concerned.

It is different, however, with the languages I comprehended as North-Turanian. They share not only common morphological features, but they are held together by a real genealogical relationship, though not a relationship so close as that which holds the Aryan or Semitic languages together.

Rask's and Prichard's Classification.

Though I am responsible for the name *Turanian*, and for the first attempt at a classification of the Turanian languages in the widest sense, similar attempts to comprehend the languages of Asia and

Europe, which are not either Aryan or Semitic, under a common name had been made long ago by Rask, by Prichard, and others. Rask admitted three families, the *Thracian* (Aryan), the *Semitic*, and the *Scythian*, the latter comprising most of what I call the Turanian languages. During his travels in India, Rask, in a letter dated 30th July, 1821, claimed for the first time the Dravidian languages also, Tamil, Telugu, etc., as decidedly Scythian [1].

The name *Allophylian*, proposed by Prichard, is in some respects better than Turanian.

Rask's Scythian and Prichard's Allophylian race was supposed to have occupied Europe and Asia before the advent of the Aryan and Semitic races, a theory which has lately been revived by Westergaard, Norris, Lenormant, and Oppert, who hold that a Turanian civilisation preceded likewise the Semitic civilisation of Babylon and Nineveh, that the cuneiform letters were invented by that Turanian race, and that remnants of its literature have been preserved in the second class of the Cuneiform Inscriptions, called sometimes Scythian, sometimes Median, and possibly in that large class of inscriptions now called Akkadian or Sumerian [2].

Whatever may be thought of these far-reaching

[1] Professor De Lagarde has stated that F. Rückert lectured at Berlin in 1843 on the relationship of the Dravidian and Turanian languages, and that I received the first impulse from him. It may be so, though I am not aware of it. Anyhow, the first impulse came from Rask; *Samlede Afhandlinger af R. K. Rask*, Kobenhavn, 1836, pp. 323 seq.

[2] The affinity of Akkadian and Sumerian with the Finno-Ugric languages has been disproved by Donner. Their affinity with the Altaic languages is maintained by Hommel, 'Die Sumero-Akkaden, ein altaisches Volk,' in *Correspondez-Blatt der deutschen Ges. für Anthropologie*, xv. Jahrg. No. 8, 1884, p. 63.

theories, no one, I believe, doubts any longer a close relationship between Mongolic and Turkic, a wider relationship between these two and Tungusic, and a still wider one between these three and Finnic and Samoyedic. Hence the Mongolic, Turkic, and Tungusic languages have been comprehended under the name of Altaic, the Finnic languages are called Ugric (including Hungarian), while Samoyedic forms, according to some, a more independent *nucleus*. All five groups together constitute what is called the Ural-Altaic family.

Vocalic Harmony.

There is one peculiarity common to many of the Ural-Altaic languages which deserves a short notice, the law of *Vocalic Harmony*. According to this law the vowels of every word must be changed and modulated so as to harmonise with the key-note struck by its chief vowel. This law pervades the Tungusic, Mongolic, Turkic, Samoyedic, and Finnic classes; and even in dialects where it is disappearing, it has often left traces of its former existence behind. The same law has been traced in the Tamulic languages also, particularly in Telugu, and in these languages it is not only the radical vowel that determines the vowels of the suffixes, but the vowel of a suffix also may react on the radical vowel [1]. The vowels in Turkish, for instance, are divided into two classes, *sharp* and *flat*. If a verb contains a sharp vowel in its radical portion, the vowels of the terminations are all sharp, while the same terminations, if following a root with a flat vowel, modulate their vowels into a flat key. Thus

[1] Cf. Caldwell, *Dravidian Grammar*, second ed., p. 78.

we have *sev-mek*, to love, but *bak-mak*, to regard, *mek* or *mak* being the termination of the infinitive. Thus we say *ev-ler*, the houses, but *at-lar*, the *horses*, *ler* or *lar* being the termination of the plural.

No Aryan or Semitic language has preserved a similar freedom in the harmonic arrangement of its vowels, while traces of it have been found among the most distant members of the Turanian family, as in Hungarian, Mongolian, Turkish, the Yakut, spoken in the north of Siberia, in Telugu, Tulu[1], and in dialects spoken on the eastern frontier of India.

[1] 'In Tulu final short *u* is left unchanged only after words containing labial vowels (*bududu*, having left); it is changed into *ü* after all other vowels (*pandüdü*, having said).'—Dr. Gundert.

LECTURE XIII.

LANGUAGES, NOT ARYAN AND NOT SEMITIC.

The Ural-Altaic Family.

WE now proceed to examine the principal languages belonging to the Ural-Altaic family.

The Samoyedic.

The tribes speaking Samoyedic dialects are spread along the Yenisei and Ob rivers, and were pushed more and more North by their Mongolic successors. They have now dwindled down to about 16,000 souls. Five dialects, however, have been distinguished in their language by Castrén, the *Yurakian*, *Tawgyan*, *Yeniseian*, *Ostjako-Samoyede*, and *Kamassinian*, with several local varieties.

The vocalic harmony is most carefully preserved in the *Kamassinian* dialect, but seems formerly to have existed in all. The Samoyedic has no gender of nouns, but three numbers, singular, dual, and plural, and eight cases. The verb has two tenses, an Aorist (present and future) and a Preterite. Besides the indicative, there is a subjunctive and an imperative.

Altaic Languages.

This name comprehends the Tungusic, Mongolic, and Turkic languages. Some of the Tungusic and Mongolic dialects represent the lowest phase of agglutination, which in some cases is as yet no more than juxtaposition, while in Turkish agglutination has

really entered into the inflectional phase. The vocalic harmony prevails throughout.

Tungusic Class.

The *Tungusic* branch extends from China northward to Siberia and westward to 113°, where the river Tunguska partly marks its frontier. The Tungusic tribes in Eastern Siberia are under Russian sway. They consist of about 70,000 souls; some are called *Tchapogires*, some *Orotongs*. Other Tungusic tribes belong to the Chinese empire, and are known by the name of *Mandshu*, a name taken after they had conquered China in 1644, and founded the present imperial dynasty. Their country is called Mandshuria.

Mongolic Class.

The original seats of the people who speak Mongolic dialects lie near the Lake Baikal and in the eastern parts of Siberia, where we find them as early as the ninth century after Christ. They were divided into three classes, the *Mongols* proper, the *Buriäts*, and the *Ölöts* or *Kalmüks*. Chingis-Khan (1227) united them into a nation and founded the Mongolian empire, which included, however, not only Mongolic, but likewise Tungusic and Turkic (commonly, though wrongly, called Tataric) tribes.

The name of Tatar soon became the terror of Asia and Europe, and, changed into Tartar, as if derived from *Tartarus*, it was applied promiscuously to all the nomadic warriors whom Asia then poured forth over Europe. Originally Tatar was a name of the Mongolic races, but through their political ascendancy in Asia after Chingis-Khan, it became usual to call all the tribes which were under Mongolian sway by

the name of Tatar. In linguistic works Tataric is now used in two several senses. Following the example of writers of the Middle Ages, Tataric, like Scythian in Greek, has been fixed upon as the general term comprising all languages spoken by the nomadic tribes of Asia. Secondly, Tataric, by a strange freak, has become the name of that class of languages of which the Turkish is the most prominent member. While the Mongolic class—that which in fact has the greatest claims to the name of Tataric—is never so called, it has become an almost universal custom to apply this name to the third or Turkic branch of the Ural-Altaic division; and the races belonging to this branch have in many instances themselves adopted the name.

The conquests of the Mongols, or the descendants of Chingis-Khan, were not confined, however, to these Turkish tribes. They conquered China in the East, where they founded the Mongolic dynasty of Yuan, and in the West, after subduing the Khalifs of Bagdad and the Sultans of Iconium, they conquered Moscow, and devastated the greater part of Russia. In 1240 they invaded Poland, in 1241 Silesia. Here they recoiled before the united armies of Germany, Poland, and Silesia. They retired into Moravia, and, having exhausted that country, occupied Hungary.

At that time they had to choose a new Khan, which could only be done at Karakorum, the old capital of their empire. Thither they withdrew to elect an emperor to govern an empire which then extended from China to Poland, from India to Siberia. But a realm of such vast proportions could not be long held together, and towards the end of the

thirteenth century it broke up into several independent states, all under Mongolian princes, but no longer under one Khan of Khans. Thus new independent Mongolic empires arose in China, Turkestan, Siberia, Southern Russia, and Persia. In 1360 the Mongolian dynasty was driven out of China; in the fifteenth century they lost their hold on Russia. In Central Asia they rallied once more under Timur (1369), whose sway was again acknowledged from Karakorum to Persia and Anatolia. But, in 1468, this empire also fell by its own weight, and for want of powerful rulers like Chingis-Khan or Timur. In Jagatai alone—the country extending from the Aral Lake to the Hindu-Kush between the rivers Oxus and Yaxartes (Jihon and Sihon), and once governed by Jagatai, the son of Chingis-Khan—the Mongolian dynasty maintained itself, and thence it was that Baber, a descendant of Timur, conquered India, and founded there a Mongolian dynasty, surviving up to our own times in the Great Moguls of Delhi. Most Mongolic tribes are now under the sway of the nations whom they once had conquered, the Tungusic sovereigns of China, the Russian Czars, and the Turkish Sultans.

The Mongolic language, although spoken (but not continuously) from China as far as the Volga, has given rise to but few dialects. Next to the Tungusic, the Mongolic is the poorest language of the Ural-Altaic family, and the scantiness of grammatical terminations accounts for the fact that, as a language, it has remained very much unchanged. There is, however, a distinction between the language as spoken by the Eastern, Western, and Northern tribes; and incipient

traces of grammatical life have lately been discovered by Castrén, the great Swedish traveller and Turanian philologist, in the spoken dialect of the Buriäts. In it the persons of the verb are distinguished by affixes, while, according to the rules of Mongolic grammar, no other dialect distinguishes in the verb between am*o*, am*as*, am*at*.

Turkic Class.

Much more important are the Turkic languages, most prominent among which is the Turkish itself, or the Osmanli of Constantinople. The different Turkic dialects, of which the Osmanli is one, occupy one of the largest linguistic areas, extending from the Lena and the Polar Sea down to the Adriatic.

Turkish Grammar.

It is a real pleasure to read a Turkish grammar, even though one may have no wish to acquire it practically. The ingenious manner in which the numerous grammatical forms are brought out, the regularity which pervades the system of declension and conjugation, the transparency and intelligibility of the whole structure, must strike all who have a sense for that wonderful power of the human mind which is displayed in language. Given so small a number of graphic and demonstrative roots as would hardly suffice to express the commonest wants of human beings, to produce an instrument that shall render the faintest shades of feeling and thought: given a vague infinitive or a stern imperative, to derive from it such moods as an optative or subjunctive, and tenses such as an aorist or paulo-post future; given incoherent utterances, to arrange them into a

system where all is uniform and regular, all combined and harmonious,—such is the work of the human mind which we see realised in language. But in most languages nothing of this early process remains visible. They stand before us like solid rocks, and the microscope of the philologist alone can reveal the remains of organic life with which they are built up.

In the grammar of the Turkic languages, on the contrary, we have before us a language of perfectly transparent structure, and a grammar the inner workings of which we can study, as if watching the building of cells in a crystal beehive. An eminent Orientalist remarked, 'We might imagine Turkish to be the result of the deliberations of some eminent society of learned men;' but no such society could have devised what the mind of man produced, left to itself in the steppes of Tartary, and guided only by its innate laws, or by an instinctive power as wonderful as any within the realm of nature.

Finno-Ugric Class.

We now proceed to the Finnic class, which, according to Castrén, is divided into four branches.

(1) The *Ugric*, comprising Ostjakian, Vogulian, and Hungarian.

(2) The *Bulgaric*[1], comprising Tcheremissian and Mordvinian.

[1] The name Bulgaric is not borrowed from Bulgaria, on the Danube; Bulgaria, on the contrary, received its name (replacing Moesia) from Bulgaric armies by whom it was conquered in the seventh century. Bulgarian tribes marched from the Volga to the Don, and after remaining for a time under the sovereignty of the Avars on the Don and Dnieper, they advanced to the Danube in 635, and founded there the Bulgarian kingdom. This has retained its name to the present day, though the original Bulgarians have long been absorbed and replaced by Slavonic inhabitants, and both brought under Turkish sway since 1392.

(3) The *Permic*, comprising Permian, Syrjänian, Votjakian.

(4) The *Finnic*, comprising Finnish, Estonian, Lapponian, Karelian, Livonian, Wotian.

Fins.

For our own purposes the Fins and Estonians are the most interesting among the Finno-Ugric tribes. The Fins call themselves *Suomalainen*, i. e. inhabitants of fens. They are settled in the province of Finland (formerly belonging to Sweden, but since 1809 annexed to Russia), and in parts of the governments of Archangel and Olonetz. Their literature and, above all, their popular poetry bear witness to a high intellectual development in times which we may call almost mythical, and in places more favourable to the glow of poetical feelings than their present abode, the last refuge Europe could afford them. The epic songs still live among the poorest, recorded by oral tradition alone, and preserving all the features of a perfect metre and of a more ancient language. A national feeling has lately arisen amongst the Fins, despite of Russian supremacy; and the labours of Sjögren, Lönnrot, Castrén, Kellgren, Donner and others, receiving hence a powerful impulse, have produced results truly surprising. From the mouths of the aged an epic poem has been collected equalling the *Iliad* in length and completeness—nay, if we can forget for a moment all that we in our youth learned to call beautiful, not less beautiful. A Fin is not a Greek, and Wainamoïnen was not a Homeric rhapsodos. But if the poet may take his colours from that nature by which he is surrounded, if he may depict the men with whom he lives, the *Kalevala*

possesses merits not dissimilar from those of the *Iliad*, and will claim its place as the fifth national epic of the world, side by side with the Ionian songs, with the *Mahâbhârata*, the *Shâhnâmeh*, and the *Nibelunge*. If we want to study the circumstances under which short ballads may grow up and become amalgamated after a time into a real epic poem, nothing can be more instructive than the history of the collection of the Kalevala. We have here facts before us, not mere surmises, as in the case of the Homeric poems and the Nibelunge. We can still see how some poems were lost, others were modified; how certain heroes and episodes became popular, and attracted and absorbed what had been originally told of other heroes and other episodes. Lönnrot could watch the effect of a good and of a bad memory among the people who repeated the songs to him, and he makes no secret of having himself used the same freedom in the final arrangement of these poems which the people used from whom he learnt them. This early literary cultivation has not been without a powerful influence on the language. It has imparted permanence to its forms and a traditional character to its words, so that at first sight we might almost doubt whether the grammar of this language had not left the agglutinative stage altogether. The agglutinative type, however, yet remains, and its grammar shows a luxuriance of grammatical combination second only to Turkish and Hungarian. Like Turkish it observes the 'harmony of vowels,' a feature which lends a peculiar charm to its poetry.

The yield of this popular poetry for mythological and religious researches is very considerable.

The Estonians.

The Ests or Estonians, neighbours of the Fins, and speaking a language closely allied to the Finnish, possess likewise large fragments of ancient national poetry. Dr. Kreutzwald has been able to put together a kind of epic poem, called *Kalewipoeg*, the Son of Kalew, not so grand and perfect as the Kalevala, yet interesting as a parallel.

The languages which I formerly comprehended under the general name of South-Turanian, should, for the present at least, be treated as independent branches of speech.

Tamulic Languages.

There can be no doubt about the Tamulic or Dravidian languages constituting a well-defined family, held together by strongly marked grammatical features. *Tamil*, *Telugu*, *Canarese*, and *Malayalam* occupy nearly the whole of the Indian peninsula. Some scattered dialects, still spoken north of the Dekhan, such as those of the *Gonds*, *Uraon-Kols*, *Râjmahals*, and *Brahuis*, show that the race speaking Tamulic languages occupied formerly more northern seats, and was driven from the North to the South by the Aryan colonists of the country.

Munda Languages.

There is another cluster of languages, the *Munda* or *Kol*, which were formerly classed with the Tamulic, but which, as I was the first to prove in my Letter on the Turanian Languages[1], constitute by themselves an independent family of speech. The dialects of the *Santhals*, *Kols*, *Hos*, *Bhumij* belong to this class.

[1] Letter to Chevalier Bunsen, 'On the Turanian Languages,' in Bunsen's *Christianity and Mankind*, vol. iii. p. 263. 1854.

These dialects, which I had called Munda, Sir G. Campbell proposed to call Kolarian.

Taic Languages.

In the same Letter on the Turanian Languages, I comprehended under the name of *Taic*, the *Siamese*, and its congeners, such as *Laos*, *Shan* (*Tenasserim*), *Ahom*, *Khamti*, and *Kassia*.

Gangetic Languages.

Under *Gangetic* I classed *Tibetan*, with such related dialects as *Lepcha*, *Murmi*, *Magar*, *Gurung*, etc.

Lohitic Languages.

Under *Lohitic* I arranged *Burmese* with *Bodo*, *Garo*, *Nâga*, *Singpho*, and similar dialects.

The Lohitic and Gangetic languages together are sometimes spoken of as *Bhotîya*.

Languages of Farther India.

There are still the languages of what used to be called Farther India, but these languages, now spoken by *Anamites*, *Peguans*, *Cambodjans*, and others, have been so little explored in the spirit of comparative philology that it must suffice for the present to mention their names. For our own purposes, the study of Natural Religion, they have yielded as yet very little. They have long been under the influence of either China, Tibet, or India, and have hardly attracted the attention of the collector of sacred folk-lore.

Languages of the Caucasus.

The same remark applies to the languages spoken in the Caucasus, such as the Georgian, Lazian, Suanian,

Mingrelian, Abchasian, Circassian, Thush, etc. They have been studied, but they have not yet been classified with any degree of success, and they yield us hardly any information on the natural growth of religious ideas.

Language and Religion.

We have thus surveyed the principal languages of Europe and Asia, more particularly those which have supplied the living soil for the growth of mythology and religion. I have intentionally confined my remarks to languages, without saying much of those who spoke them.

Blood and hair and bones can teach us nothing or very little about religion, and the more carefully the two sciences of ethnology and philology are kept apart, the better, I believe, it will be for both. We know, from history, that races may give up their own language and adopt that of their conquerors, or, in some cases, of the conquered. Much more is this the case with religion. Our interest therefore is with religion, whoever the people were who believed in it, just as we classify languages regardless of the people by whom they were spoken. Buddhism, for instance, is an Aryan religion, and its origin would be unintelligible on any but an Aryan substratum of language and thought. But it has been adopted by races whose languages belong to a totally different family, and whose intellectual peculiarities have completely changed the original character of Buddha's teaching. Who could understand Buddhism if he knew it in its Chinese, Mongolian, or Japanese form only?

In the case of Christianity we have a Semitic re-

ligion which has become Aryan in every sense of the word. And again, I ask, who could understand the original character of Christianity, unless he knew the language which gave rise to such names and concepts as Elohim and Jehovah and Messiah, unless he knew its antecedents in the Old Testament?

It may happen that whole nations, most interesting to us in their ethnological and political character, are of no account whatever in the study of religion. Japan, for instance, so far as it is Buddhist, can teach us nothing except by showing us how a religion, most spiritual in its origin, may become formal and ceremonial and unmeaning, if transferred to an uncongenial soil. Fortunately, however, something of the native religion of Japan also has been preserved to us in the Shintoism of the past and of the present day. It is by this that Japan supplies a really important chapter in the history of Natural Religion.

What applies to Japan, applies likewise to such countries as Tibet, Burmah, and Siam, all of which have adopted the religion of Buddha, and can be of real interest to us by the remnants of their ancient popular religion only, which survive here and there in superstitions, customs, and legends.

Egyptian.

A larger harvest awaits the student of religion in Egypt. Here, however, both ethnology and philology offer us as yet but little help. Whether the ancient language of Egypt shows any traces of real relationship with Aryan and Semitic speech, is a question which has been asked again and again, but has never been satisfactorily answered. Similarities with Se-

mitic grammar there are, and there are coincidences between Egyptian and Aryan roots which are sometimes startling. Some scholars have gone so far as to recognise in the language of Egypt the most primitive form of human speech, previous even to its differentiation as Aryan and Semitic. That Egypt was open from the earliest times to ethnic influences from the Semitic, the Aryan, and likewise from the African world, cannot be denied. But, for the present, we must be careful not to dogmatise on these problems, and it will be best to treat the Egyptian religion, for the study of which we possess such ample materials, as an independent nucleus of religious thought.

The adjacent languages of Northern Africa are likewise as yet in what may be called an unclassified state. In ancient times the language of Carthage and other Phenician settlements on the Northern coast was Semitic. But what are called the *Sub-Semitic* or sometimes the *Hamitic* languages, the *Berber* or *Libyan* (Kabyle, Shilhe, Tuareg or Tamasheg), and some of the aboriginal dialects of Abyssinia or Ethiopia (the Somâli, Galla, Beja or Bihâri, Agau, Dankali, etc.), must be submitted to a far more searching analysis before they can claim a real right to the name of either Hamitic or Sub-Semitic. Fortunately they are of small importance to us in our investigations of primitive religious concepts and names, as Mohammedanism has effaced nearly every trace of religious beliefs which preceded it in those regions.

Africa.

There is no time, and there is no necessity, for my laying before you the as yet only partially disen-

tangled network of languages spread over the rest of Africa. For our own purposes it will be sufficient if we distinguish between those linguistic and religious groups to which reference will have to be made in the course of our studies.

The *Nubas* on the Upper Nile, who, according to F. Müller, constitute with the *Fulahs* a separate linguistic class, need not occupy us at present, because here also little is known of their ancient religion previous to their conversion to Mohammedanism. Lepsius, in his 'Nubische Grammatik,' denies the independent character of the language. There remain therefore:

1. The *Hottentots and Bushmen* in the South. The best judges now consider these two races, in spite of striking differences in language and religion, as originally one.

2. The *Bântu races*, or *Kafirs*, who extend in an unbroken line on the East-coast from several degrees north of the Equator down to the Hottentots, with whom they are often closely united. They have spread from East to West across the whole continent. The typical form of their language is so pronounced that there can be no doubt as to the relationship of these languages, though it may be that several little explored dialects are at present treated as Bântu which further analysis will have to adjudge to a different class. Dr. Bleek, who was the first to establish the relationship of the best-known Bântu languages on a truly scientific basis, was also the first to show the influence which such languages would naturally exercise on the religious ideas of those who spoke them. Being without grammatical gender, in

our sense of the word, these languages do not lend themselves easily to the personification of the powers of nature. Worship of ancestral spirits is very general among these Bântu tribes.

3. The *Negro races*, extending from the Western coast of Africa towards the interior. Here much remains to be done, and we must hope that future researches will lead to the discovery of several subdivisions of what are now called Negro languages. Something, however, has been gained, in so far as this ill-defined name of Negro is restricted for the present to the inhabitants of the centre of Africa. What is called fetishism was first observed among these tribes, though it never constituted the original or the exclusive character of their religion.

Lepsius [1], in his 'Nubische Grammatik,' tries to reduce the population of Africa to three types:—

1. The Northern negroes;
2. The Southern or Bântu negroes;
3. The Cape negroes.

And in accordance with this ethnological system, he arranges the languages also into three zones:—

(1) The Southern, south of the Equator, the Bântu dialects, explored chiefly on the west and east coasts, but probably stretching across the whole continent, comprising the Herero, Pongue, Fernando Po, Kafir ('Osa and Zulu), Tshuana (Soto and Rolon), Suahili, etc.; (2) the Northern zone, between the Equator and the Sahara, and east as far as the Nile, comprising Efik, Ibo, Yoruba, Ewe, Akra or Ga, Otyi, Kru, Vei (Mande), Temne, Bullom, Wolof, Fula, Sonrhai, Kanuri, Teda (Tibu), Logone, Wandala, Bagirmi, Mâba,

[1] M. M., *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 239.

Konjâra, Umâle, Dinka, Shilluk, Bongo, Bari, Oigob, Nuba, and Barea; (3) the Hamitic zone, including the extinct Egyptian and Coptic, the Libyan dialects, such as Tuareg (Kabyl and Amasheg), Hausa, the Kushitic or Ethiopian languages, including the Beja dialects, the Soho, Falasha, Agau, Galla, Dankali, and Somâli. The Hottentot and Bushman languages are referred to the same zone.

The Hamitic languages comprised in the third zone, the Egyptian, Libyan, and Kushitic, are considered by Lepsius as alien to Africa. They are all intruders from the East, though reaching Africa at different times and by different roads. The true aboriginal nucleus of African speech is contained in the first zone, and represented by that class of languages which, on account of their strongly marked grammatical character, has been called the Bântu family. Professor Lepsius attempts to show that the languages of the Northern zone are modifications of the same type which is represented in the Southern zone, these modifications being chiefly due to contact and more or less violent friction with languages belonging to the Hamitic zone, and, to a certain extent, with Semitic languages also.

America.

Imperfect as our present classification of the native languages, and, in consequence, of the native religions of Africa is, still we have advanced so far that no scholar would speak any longer of African languages, and no theologian of African religions.

The same applies to America. The division and the mutual relations of the numerous languages spoken on that continent are far from being satis-

factorily established. Still, no one speaks any longer of American languages in general, nor would any one venture to treat the various religions of America as varieties of one and the same original type. Progress has been slow, still there has been progress here also. We can distinguish between at least four independent centres of language and likewise of religion, and though future researches may help us to subdivide more minutely, they will hardly tend to remove the landmarks which so far have been established.

These four centres of language and religion are:—

1. The *Red-Indians* or *Red-skins* in the North. They will for the present have to be treated as one group, though not only in their language, but in their religious ideas and social customs also, different tribes exhibit very marked differences. Totemism, which has often been represented as the common feature of their religion, was originally much more of a social custom than a religious belief, though, like many social customs, it acquired in time something of a religious sanction. Their religion, if we are allowed to generalise, is based on a belief in divine spirits, often in a Supreme Spirit, and the questions of the creation of the world and of man have occupied the thoughts of many of these so-called savages.

2. The next nucleus of an independent religion existed in *Mexico*, where, if we may trust tradition, two immigrations took place from the North, bringing with them new elements of civilisation. These immigrants are known by the names of *Tolteks* and *Azteks*, the latter driving the former before them into more southern latitudes. Religion and ceremonial had

reached a very high development in Mexico at the time of its discovery and devastation by the Spaniards. Even philosophical theories on the true nature of the gods were not unknown among the higher classes.

3. *Central America* seems to have been the seat of an independent civilisation, though strongly influenced by immigrations from the North. One language, the *Quiché*, has been more carefully studied, and an ancient book, the *Popol Vuh*, written in that language, has been published in the original and translated. Some scholars have claimed for it a place among the Sacred Books of the world, and it is certainly a rich mine for studying the traditions of the *Mayas*, as they existed in the fifteenth century.

4. *Peru*, the kingdom of the Incas, is chiefly distinguished by its solar religion and solar worship, the very rulers being considered as children of the sun. Here also philosophical opinions seem to have sprung up from a religious soil, and the reasoning of a famous Inca has often been quoted, who maintained that there must be a higher power than their father, the sun, because the sun was not free, but had to perform its appointed course from day to day and from year to year.

Besides these four groups, there are still a number of independent tribes of whose language and religion we know something, but not enough to enable us to classify them either by themselves or with other tribes.

Such are the Arctic or Hyperborean tribes, more particularly the *Eskimos* and *Greenlanders* in the extreme North; the *Arowakes* and the once famous *Caribes* in the north of South America and in the

islands of the Antilles; the aboriginal inhabitants of *Brazil*; the *Abipones*, so well described by Dobrizhofer (1784); and in the South, the *Patagonians* and the inhabitants of *Tierra del Fuego*.

Until the languages of these people have been carefully analysed by real scholars, any attempt at grouping them would prove simply mischievous. We are at present in a stage where our duty is to distinguish, not to confound. Even to speak of the inhabitants of Tierra del Fuego as one race has produced, as we saw, disastrous results, and it is to be hoped that we shall hear no more of a South American language or of a North American religion. It is true that certain legends have been found in the North as well as in the South of America, which seem to point to a common origin. But it will be time to account for such coincidences after the legends of each centre have been studied by themselves, and after some clearer light has been thrown on the component elements of the population of the whole American continent.

How, under present circumstances, scholars could have been bold enough to trace the whole American race to immigrations from Asia or even from Europe, is difficult to understand. The physical possibility, no doubt, was there, whether across the island bridges in the North, or by sea from West or East. We heard but lately how a large vessel, cast off by its crew, drifted safely from America to England (the Hebrides). The same may have happened on either coast of America. But any attempts to recognise in the inhabitants of America descendants of Jews, Phenicians, Chinese, or Celts are for the present

simply hopeless, and are in fact outside the pale of real science.

Oceanic Languages.

The languages which extend from Madagascar on the East coast of Africa to the Sandwich Islands, West of America, have been far more carefully studied than those of America and Africa. I speak of languages, not of races, for if ethnological classification has proved a failure anywhere, it has when applied to the mixture of blood that led to the formation of such races as Australians, Papuans, Malays, Polynesians, Melanesians, Micronesians, Negritos, Mincopies, Orang-utans, and all the rest.

From the latest work on this family of languages, by Dr. Codrington ('The Melanesian Languages,' Oxford, 1885), it appears that we must admit an original, though very distant, relationship between the Malay, the Polynesian, Melanesian, and Micronesian languages, but that in their later development it is possible to distinguish between the *Malay*, the *Polynesian*, and the *Melanesian* (with *Micronesian*) as independent branches of a common stem. The dialects of *Australia* stand as yet apart, as too little known, as well as those of New Guinea, though some dialects, like the Motu of New Guinea, are clearly Melanesian.

It follows from this division, that with regard to religion also we must distinguish between a *Malay*, a *Polynesian*, a *Melanesian*, and possibly a *New Guinea* (Papuan) and *Australian* centre. Our information, however, from the two last, is very imperfect.

Malay.

Owing to the proximity of the Malay islands to India, they have from the earliest times been overrun by immigrants, conquerors, and missionaries from the Asiatic Continent. Their ancient religious opinions are covered up and hidden under superimposed strata of Hindu, Buddhist, Mohammedan, and Christian faith, and what there is of native growth in Java, Borneo and elsewhere represents probably the mere dregs of a former religion.

Polynesia.

The *Polynesian* languages, on the contrary, present us with an abundant growth both of religion and of poetical mythology. These Polynesian traditions are particularly valuable to the student of comparative mythology, because they offer striking similarities with the legends of Greeks, Romans, Teutons and others, without the possibility of a common origin or of a later historical contact.

Melanesia.

The *Melanesians*, so far as we can judge, do not differ much from the Polynesians and Micronesians in the fundamental outlines of their religious opinions, but they are not so rich in imaginative legends. Further research, however, may modify this opinion.

As to the *Australians* and the *Papuas* of New Guinea, very little has been ascertained as yet of their religion, except what is embodied in their ceremonial observances and social customs.

Classification of Languages, why necessary.

This linguistic and religious survey, which has

taken up much of our time, will nevertheless, I hope, prove a saving of time in the progress of our work. Imperfect as it is, it will enable us to guard against certain mistakes very common in the Science of Religion. We have established certain broad lines of division in language and religion, and we shall hear no more of what used to be called the religion of savages, or barbarians, or black men, or red men, or Africans, or Americans. The student of religion knows no savages, no barbarians. Some of the races who are called savage or barbarous possess the purest, simplest, and truest views of religion, while some nations who consider themselves in the very van of civilisation, profess religious dogmas of the most degraded and degrading character. The African Zulu who was a match for Bishop Colenso, cannot be classed as an African or black man together with the royal butchers of Dahomey; and the Inca philosopher who searched for something more divine than the sun, cannot be placed by the side of the Blackfoot performing the sun-dance [1].

Progress in the Science of Religion means at present discrimination, both with regard to the subject and the object of religious faith. As we speak no longer of the believers in a religion as either savages or barbarians, black men or red men, Africans or Americans, the idea also that we can truly characterise any religion by such general terms as fetishism, totemism, animism, solarism, shamanism, etc., has long been surrendered by all critical students. In-

[1] The Blackfoot Sun-Dance, by Rev. John McLean, in the Proceedings of the Canadian Institute, No. 151; 1889. Notes bearing on the use of ordure in rites of a religious character, by John G. Bourke, Washington, 1888.

gredients of all these *isms* may be found in most religions, but not one of them can be fully defined by such vague terms. Religions are everywhere the result of a long historical growth, and, like languages, they retain even in their latest forms traces of the stages through which they have passed. There is fetishism in some forms of Christianity; there is spiritualism in the creed of some so-called worshippers of fetishes. Generalisation will come in time, but generalisation without a thorough knowledge of particulars is the ruin of all sciences, and has hitherto proved the greatest danger to the Science of Religion.

LECTURE XIV.

LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT.

What should we be without Language?

AFTER we have finished our survey of the languages which are spoken at present over the civilised world, and which have been spoken there so long as we know anything of the presence of the human race on this planet of ours, it is time to ask the question, what language really is.

Now I ask, Do you know anything in the whole world more wonderful than language?

No doubt, even if we were not able to speak, we should still be able to see, to hear, to taste, to smell, and to feel.

We could taste what is sweet and like it, and taste what is bitter and dislike it. We might run away from the fire, because it burns, and turn towards the water, because it is cool, or because it quenches our thirst; but we should have no words to distinguish fire from water, or hot from cold, or sweet from bitter. We should be like children who have burnt their fingers and cry, who have tasted sugar and smile, who have swallowed vinegar and howl. Some people might call this running away from what hurts, and turning towards what is pleasant, rational, just as they say that a dog is rational because he runs away from his master when he raises his stick, and jumps up at him when he holds out a piece of meat.

If by a bold metaphor this is to be called reason, we need not object, if only we distinguish between conscious and unconscious, between worded and unworded reason, and if we remember that, by using reason in that very enlarged sense, we may be driven in the end to call even the shutting of our eyes at the approach of a blow an act of reasoning.

However, with or without language, we might certainly do all this, and a great deal more. We might fight and kill, we might love and protect. We might, if we were very clever, accumulate dispositions and habits which by repeated inheritance would enable our descendants to build nests, or warrens, or beehive huts. The strongest might possibly learn to act as sentinels and make themselves obeyed; the weaker sex might even invent signals of danger and other signs of communication.

I doubt not that chivalrous and unchivalrous feelings also might be aroused in our breast, such as we see among the higher animals, and that jealousy and revenge as well as friendship and love might influence our actions.

But with all this, imagine that we were sitting here, looking at one another with a kind of good-natured bovine stare, but without a single word, not only on our lips, but in our minds; our mind being in fact a mere negative plate, without our being able to lay hold of any of the outlines drawn on it, by saying this is this, and this is that!

Definition of Thinking.

Some philosophers, as you know, hold that men, like animals, though they possessed no language,

might still sit silent and think. Unfortunately they do not tell us what they mean and what they do not mean by thinking, but it seems clear that they use thinking as synonymous with every kind of mental activity. Des Cartes, when discussing his fundamental principle, *Cogito ergo sum*, did the same; but, as an honest philosopher, he warned us that he used *cogitare* in that widest sense [1], so as to include sensation, perception, memory, imagination, and all the rest. If the meaning of to think is avowedly stretched to that extent, no one would dream of denying that animals, though speechless, can think, and that we also could think without language, that is to say, without ever having possessed language, without knowing one word from another.

What are we thinking of?

But now let us ask those philosophers the simple question, If we can think without language, what are we thinking of? What indeed? I do not wish to lay a trap, like a cross-examining lawyer. Of course, if you told me what you were thinking of, you could do it only by using a word. Nor do I claim to be a thought-reader, and tell you, without your having told me, what you are thinking of, for that, of course, I could only do by using a word. But I ask you to ask yourselves, what you are thinking of, if you are thinking of anything, and I shall join myself in that experiment. Suppose we were all thinking, as we call it, of a dog, then as soon as we attempt to answer to ourselves the question, What are we think-

[1] Des Cartes, *Méditations*, ed. Cousin, vol. i. p. 253; 'Qu'est ce qu'une chose qui pense? C'est une chose qui doute, qui entend, qui conçoit, qui affirme, qui nie, qui veut, qui ne veut pas, qui imagine aussi, et qui sent.'

ing of? we can only do it by saying to ourselves or to others, *Dog*. It is perfectly true that *canis*, *chien*, *Hund* would do as well, and we need not even pronounce any of these words while remembering a certain dog, or while hearing the barking of a number of dogs about us. But though we may suppress the sound or recollection of a word after we have once heard it, or replace it even by another word taken from another language, we cannot possibly become conscious to ourselves of what we are thinking, without having the word in reserve, or, as the Italians say, *in petto*, or, as some savages say, in the stomach.

Thinking in German or English.

If any doubt still remains in your mind on the impossibility of real thought without language, ask yourselves what you mean in asking a foreigner who has long lived in England, whether he thinks in German or in English? What would you say, if he were to answer, In neither. You would, I believe, think, and think rightly, that he was a fool.

Why we cannot think without words.

But if that is so, if thought, in the properly restricted sense of that word, is impossible without language, you may well ask, *why* that should be so. Many people suppose that we first form our thoughts, or as they call it our ideas, and that afterwards we go in search of certain sounds, which we attach to our ideas, and which we retain because we find them very useful for the purpose of communication. Now I ask you, is such a process possible or conceivable? Do we ever find ourselves in possession of a concept, but without a name for it, unless indeed we have for-

gotten, and know that we have forgotten, the name which we formerly possessed? Or is there anywhere in the whole world a place where we could find empty sounds, such as *father* and *mother*, meaning nothing as yet, but ready for use when wanted? I know some people speak of inexpressible thoughts, but they mean feelings; others say they may have a clear concept of a plant, without knowing its name; they speak of that plant, Oh, what do you call it? But is not *plant* a name, is not *vegetable* a name, is not *object* a name, is not *it* a name, is not even *What do you call it*, a name?

We often do not know the exact or right name, but in that case we always know the more general name. If we had never seen or heard of an elephant, we should not know its name, but we should know that it was an animal and call it so; we should know that it was a quadruped, and call it so. If we did not know whether what we saw was an inanimate lump, or a plant, or a bird, fish, or mammal, we should have no name for it beyond the name *thing*. We could not name it further, because we know no more about it, because we could not bring it under any more definite conceptual name. We may see, hear, and touch the elephant, we may have a more or less exact image of it, but until we can predicate or name some distinguishing feature of it, we could neither name nor know it, in the true sense of that word.

To suppose, as is done by most philosophers, that we first find ourselves in command of an army of naked concepts, and that we afterwards array them in verbal uniforms, is impossible for two very simple reasons; first, because there is no magazine which

could supply these verbal uniforms, and secondly, because we never meet with naked concepts; or, to put it more strongly still, because we never meet with a rabbit without a skin, or an oyster without a shell.

The reason why real thought is impossible without language is very simple. What we call language is not, as is commonly supposed, thought *plus* sound, but what we call thought is really language *minus* sound. That is to say, when we are once in possession of language, we may hum our words, or remember them in perfect silence, as we remember a piece of music without a single vibration of our vocal chords. We may also abbreviate our words, so that such expressions as, 'If Plato is right,' may stand for a whole library. We may in fact eliminate the meaning of the word so that the word only remains as a symbol[1]; we may even substitute algebraic signs for real words, and thus carry on processes of reckoning or reasoning which in their final results are perfectly astonishing. But as little as we can reckon without actual or disguised numerals, can we reason without actual or disguised words. This is the last result to which the Science of Language has led us, and which has changed the Science of Language into the Science of Thought. '*We think in words*' must become the charter of all exact philosophy in future, and it will form, I believe, at the same time the reconciliation of all systems of philosophy in the past.

Communication, not language.

But surely, it is said, men communicate, and animals too communicate, without language. Yes,

[1] *Science of Thought*, p. 35.

they certainly do, we all do, some more, others less successfully. The Polynesians, as Chamisso[1] tells us in his charming Voyage round the world (1815–1818), are sparing of words, and a wink often takes the place of a long speech. Perhaps it does so even among less savage races. They do not even say *Yes*, when they can help it, but only move their brow. It is only to a stranger that they will say *Inga*, yes. But such communication is not thought, if we use our words properly.

I go even a step further, and maintain that we are so made that, whether we like it or not, we must show by outward signs what passes within us. There are few people who can so repress their emotions as not to let others see when they are angry or happy. We blush, we tremble, we frown, we pout, we grin, we laugh, we smile, and what can be more tell-tale, and sometimes more eloquent, than these involuntary signs? I have no doubt that animals betray their feelings by similar signs, and that these signs are understood by their fellow-creatures. You have only to disturb an ant-hill, and see what happens. A number of ants will run away on their beaten tracks, they will stop every ant they meet, and every ant, after having been touched and communicated with, will run to the ant-hill to render help with the same alacrity with which a member of the fire-brigade runs towards the place of conflagration after hearing the bugle in the street. We cannot understand how it is done, but that little head of an ant, not larger than the head of a pin, must have been able to express terror and implore help, even as a dog will run up to

[1] Chamisso's *Werke*, vol. i. p. 357.

you and express in his face terror, and by his motions implore your help. But when will people learn that emotions are not thoughts, and that if we call anger or joy thought, we simply muddle our own thoughts and confound our own language?

I believe that some of these involuntary manifestations of our feelings may in time lead to intentional gestures; and we know from pantomimes, also from communications that are said to take place in America and Australia between tribes speaking different languages, that this gesture-language may be brought to a very high degree of perfection. But we must not forget that in all cases where this communication by means of gestures has been observed, the parties concerned are each in possession of a real language, that in fact they think first in their own conceptual language and then translate their thoughts back into pantomime [1].

The subject, however, is curious, and deserves more study than it has hitherto received. We imagine we can understand why a person kneeling down is supposed to implore mercy, why another shaking his fist is supposed to say, Stand off! But these gestures, as used in different countries, have not always the same meaning, and even the expressive

[1] In the island of Gomera, one of the islands of the Canary Archipelago, people communicate by means of a whistling language. The island is traversed by many deep ravines and gullies which run out in all directions from the central plateau. They are not bridged, and can often only be crossed with great difficulty, so that people who really live very near to each other in a straight line have to make a circuit of hours when they wish to meet. Whistling has therefore become an excellent means of communication, and has gradually assumed the proportions of a true substitute for speech. But what they whistle is their own language.

signs used by deaf and dumb people are by no means identical all over the globe [1].

Children again, long before they are able to speak, can imitate the acts of eating, drinking, riding on their father's knees, and thus express their little wishes; but a wish is not a thought, as little as fear and horror. If some philosophers like to call these states of feeling thought, they may do so at their own peril, but they ought at all events to let us know, in order that others may be able to discount such license.

Images (Vorstellungen).

Some more serious philosophers put in a claim for images. Images, they say, such as our senses leave in our memory, may surely be called thought. They may, no doubt, if only we let others know that in our own philosophical dialect we use thinking in that extended sense. But it is surely better to distinguish and to keep the term imagination for signifying the play of our images. I myself hold it impossible that human beings should have real images without first having framed them in names; and among physiologists, Virchow denies the possibility of our having perceptions without names. But, of course, if careful observers, such as Mr. Galton, assure us that they have images without knowing what they are images of, and without remembering what they are called, we are bound to believe them, even though we cannot follow them. What they are anxious for is evidently to show that animals, though they have no language, have images, that they combine these images, and that their acts, their sensible, or, as they like to call

[1] Mallery, *Sign Language among the North-American Indians.*

them, their rational acts, are determined by them. Let that be so, at least for argument's sake. But even then, is not this imagination or even this reasoning *without language* utterly different from imagination and reasoning *with language*? Suppose a dog, instead of coming to me, as one of my dogs did, expressing his uneasiness and then dragging me on to his rug which was red, and showing me that it was occupied by my other dog, who ought to have been on his own rug which was blue, looking at me reproachfully till I had ordered the other dog away, and then taking possession with all the pride of an injured innocent of his own red rug—suppose that dog, instead of wheedling and barking were suddenly to stand up on his hind legs and say to me, 'The other dog has taken my rug; please, Sir, order him away,' should we not almost go out of our mind?

Or let us place an infant and a grown-up man side by side, the one struggling and crying for a cup of milk, the other saying plainly, 'I should like that cup of milk.' Is not the distance between these two acts immeasurable, the one being merely the result of the direct or reflex action of our senses, the other the result of a growth that has gone on for thousands of years? The grown-up man also, if he were dying of thirst, might no doubt rush towards the cup and swallow it without saying a word, and we might call the expression of his impetuous features language, and his rushing movements reason. But we should gain nothing by the use of this metaphorical language. There are philosophers who tell us that an infant could not stretch out its arms without going through a silent syllogism: 'By stretching out our arms we

obtain what we wish for; I wish for this cup of milk, therefore I stretch out my arms.' It may be so, but we know nothing about it and never shall, till the infant is able to speak, that is to say, ceases to be an infant, and then tells us what it thinks.

Between the infant, however, and the man who is able to speak, there is not a distance of ten or twenty years only. The language which he has accepted is the result of intellectual labour carried on for thousands of years. The original framing of our words and thoughts is a process which no one but the geologist of language has even the most remote idea of, and to suppose that one human being could, in the space of ten or twenty years, have accumulated the wealth of his grammar and dictionary is like believing that the earth with its mountains and rivers could have been made in six days. It is extraordinary that the same argument, which has been answered *ad nauseam*, is brought forward again and again. It is quite true that the infant and the parrot are for a time without language, and that both learn to say after a time, 'How do you do?' But the child learns to speak human language, while the parrot never speaks *Parrotese*.

Involuntary and voluntary sounds.

The next step after what has been called the language of gestures, leads us on to involuntary and voluntary sounds. I call involuntary sounds interjections which have a direct natural origin, which express joy, fear, anger, admiration, assent or dissent. To us, accustomed to our own interjections, there seems a natural appropriateness in their sound, but here too a comparative study teaches us that it is not

so. *No*, for instance, does not always mean no; in Syrianian it means yes. Even in Irish we find for No, not only *naicc*, but also *aicc*[1]. Voluntary interjections I call such imitative sounds as *bow wow* for dog, and *moo* for cow. Here, too, we find that what seems to us perfectly natural and intelligible, is not always so. Whereas to our ears the dog says *bow wow*, he says *kliff klaff* to a German ear.

It is extremely difficult to render inarticulate sounds by our alphabet. Many attempts have been made to write down the sounds uttered by birds, but hitherto with small success. A great phonetician, well acquainted with the latest theories of physiological phonetics, has spent many days and nights in watching the notes of the nightingale; and what do you think his rendering has come to? The real note of the nightingale, as reduced to alphabetical writing, is:

Dailidurei faledirannurei lidundei faledaritturei.

You know that before languages were studied scientifically, it was a very general idea that all human speech arose in that way, and that the ultimate elements of our words were imitations of natural sounds or involuntary interjections. I called these theories the *Bow-wow* and *Pooh-pooh* theories. Some philosophers have lately added a third theory, which they call the *Yo-heho* theory, but which is really a subdivision only of the *Pooh-pooh* theory. By a most extraordinary mistake this theory has been ascribed to Noiré, who was really one of its most determined opponents. According to this theory language would have been derived directly from the

[1] Zeuss, *Grammatica Celtica*. Yes in Old Irish is *iss ed*, 'est hoc,' or simply *ed*, = Goth. *ita*.—Whitley Stokes.

cries uttered by people while engaged in pulling, rubbing, digging, rowing, and similar primitive occupations.

In this the supporters of this Yo-heho theory have, no doubt, touched on a very important phase in the growth of language and thought, as we shall see presently; but if they look upon sounds such as *Yo-heho* as mere interjections, they are still in the bitterness of the Pooh-pooh theory, that is to say, they have not even perceived the difficulty of the problem which they wish to solve.

The names Bow-wow, Pooh-pooh, and Yo-heho theories have sometimes been objected to as too homely, and as possibly offensive. But as these theories in their crude form are no longer held by any scholar, these names are really quite harmless, and they are certainly useful, because they tell their own tale. If we are afraid of them, we must use the cumbersome names of *Mimetic*, *Onomatopoetic* or *Interjectional* theory, every one of them requiring an elaborate commentary.

The Bow-wow, Pooh-pooh, and Yo-heho theories.

These three theories, however, were by no means so illogical as they seem to us now. They were no doubt *a priori* theories, but they had certain facts to support them. There *are* interjections in every language, and, by the general analogy of language, some of them have been raised into verbs and adjectives and substantives. *Hush*, for instance, the German *husch*, is an interjection which in German is used to drive away birds, to express any quick movement, to attract attention, while in English it is now chiefly

employed to enjoin silence. From this interjection, and from no root, are derived in German the adjective *husch*, meaning quick, and the substantive *Husch*, quickness, also a blow, a box on the ear. Thus the lines in Shakespeare's Hamlet,

> And we have done but greenly
> In hugger mugger to inter him,

are translated in German by

> Und thöricht war's von uns, so unter'm Husch
> Ihn zu bestatten.

We have besides a German feminine substantive, *Die Husche*, which means a shower of rain, and two verbs, *huschen*, to move quickly, and *huscheln*, to scamp one's work. In English *to hush* has taken the exclusive meaning of to enjoin silence, to quiet.

This would be an illustration of the Pooh-pooh theory.

The *Bow-wow* theory can claim a number of words, the best known being *cuckoo*, in Greek κόκκυξ, in Latin *cucûlus*, in Sanskrit kokila. In Greek we have also a verb κοκκύζειν, redupl. perfect, κεκόκκυκα, to cry cuckoo.

The *Yo-heho* theory is really a subdivision of the Pooh-pooh theory, but it may be illustrated by *bang!* as an interjection that accompanies a blow; *to bang*, to beat violently, and *banged hair*, which has lately been much admired.

It would be a most interesting subject to collect all the words which, whether in English or in German, or in Latin, Greek and Sanskrit, are formed direct from interjectional elements. And it would teach us better than anything else that, after we have claimed all that can rightly be claimed for this

amorphous stratum of human speech, we have only taken the mere outworks, while the real fortress of language has not been touched.

Roots.

That fortress could not be taken by storm, but only by a regular siege;—it will not surrender to *a priori* arguments, but only to *a posteriori* analysis. This analysis was carried out by the founders of Comparative Philology, by Bopp, Grimm, Pott and others; but it had been attempted more than two thousand years ago by Sanskrit grammarians. They had taken Sanskrit, one of the richest and most primitive of Aryan languages, and by submitting every word of it to a careful analysis, that is to say, by separating all that could be separated and proved to be merely formal, they had succeeded in discovering certain elements which would yield to no further analysis, and which they therefore treated as the ultimate facts of language, and designated as roots.

The number of roots admitted by these ancient Sanskrit grammarians was far too large however. We have now reduced their number to about 800,—I believe they will be reduced still further,—and with these we undertake to account for all the really important words which occur in Sanskrit literature. In more modern languages many clusters of words derived from one root have become extinct, and their place is taken by secondary and tertiary derivatives of other roots, so that for the English Dictionary (now being published at Oxford), which is said to comprehend 250,000 words, no more than about 460 roots[1]

[1] *Science of Thought*, p. 210.

are required to account for all that has been said by Shakespeare, Milton, and Byron. But more than that: the number of independent concepts conveyed by these 800 Sanskrit roots, is not 800, or anything like it, but has been reduced to the small number of 121. With these 121 radical concepts every thought that has ever passed through a human brain can be, and has been expressed. This would have sounded like a wild dream to Plato and Aristotle, nay even to Locke and Kant, and yet it is a fact that can no more be questioned than the fact that the whole kaleidoscope of nature—all that was ever seen in this myriad-shaped world of ours—is made up of about sixty elementary substances.

With regard to the meaning of the 800 roots of Sanskrit, we find that most of them express acts, such as striking, digging, rubbing, crushing, pounding, cutting, gathering, mixing, sprinkling, burning,—acts in fact which represent some of the simplest occupations of man, but which by means of generalisation, specialisation, and metaphor have been made to express the most abstract ideas of our advanced society.. A root meaning *to strike* supplied names for a good stroke of business and for striking remarks. *To dig* came to mean to search for and to inquire. *To rub* was used for rubbing down, softening, appeasing; *to burn* came to mean to love, and also to be ashamed; and *to gather* did excellent service for expressing in primitive logic what we now call observation of facts, the connection of major and minor, or even syllogism.

And now we must gather up the threads of our own argument.

We saw that real thought was impossible without words. We have now seen that all words are made of roots, and that these roots expressed originally simple co-operative acts, such as would be performed by men in the earliest stages of their social life.

Words derived from conceptual roots.

But this is not all. Let us remember that what shook for the first time the faith of those who thought they could explain all the words of our language as imitations of natural sounds was the strange fact that in the names of animals there was no trace whatever of these sounds. After the cuckoo had been claimed as a case in point, as the great trophy or totem of the Bow-wow theory, everything else collapsed. In the names for dog there was no trace of bow-wow, in the names for horse no trace of neighing, in the names for donkey no trace of braying, in the names for cow no trace of mooing. On the contrary, it was found that every word which was derived from a root expressed a general concept. The name for *horse*, the Latin *equus*, the Sanskrit asva, was derived from a root meaning to be sharp or quick; hence it became clear that the horse had been conceived and named as a runner or racer. From the same root came words for stone, spear, needle, point, sharpness of sight, quickness of thought, to the very 'cuteness of the New World.

The *serpent* was called from a root meaning to creep along, and another name of it, the Sk. ahi, the Greek ἔχις, came from a root meaning to throttle.

Sun, Gothic *sunna*, is derived from a root *su*, to bring forth; *son*, Gothic *sunus*, comes from the same

root, in a passive sense, and meant originally the begotten, *filius*.

Hand comes from a root which exists in Gothic as *hinthan*, to seize.

Eye, Gothic *augo*, Lat. *oc-ulus*, Sk. aksha, all come from the same root, which meant originally to point, to pierce. Another name for eye in Sanskrit is netram, which means the leader, from nî, to lead.

So we could go on for ever tracing back every word to its root and its radical concept. I do not mean to say that we succeed in every case. There are still many words which have not been brought to disclose their secret history, and there is still plenty of work to do for critical etymologists.

There are many words which require no knowledge of Sanskrit at all for their etymological explanation, and which we use constantly without thinking of their etymological meaning. Thus a *settle* is clearly what we sit on, and so also, though less directly, a *saddle*; a *road* is what we ride on; a *stand* what we stand on; a *bier* is what bears us, a *burden* what we bear ourselves; a *shaft* is what is shaved or planed; a *draft* what is drawn, a *drift* what is driven, a *rift* what is riven. A *thrill* of joy, or a *thrilling* story, both come from to thrill, to pierce, to perforate: but *to bore* also, whatever its historical origin may have been, is now used to express that slow rotatory worrying talk which is apt to make us gnash our teeth [1].

Well then, you may take it as an established fact that, with the exception of some onomatopoetic survivals, our words are in the main conceptual; that

[1] On the introduction of the word *bore*, see *Academy*, Jan. 5, 12, 19, 1889.

they are derived from conceptual roots, or, to put it differently, that our words *are* concepts. If therefore it is admitted that we cannot think except in concepts, it will be easy enough to understand why we cannot think except in words.

Are concepts possible without words?

But you may say, Cannot a concept exist without a word? Certainly not, though in order to meet every possible objection, we may say that no concept can exist without a sign, whether it be a word or anything else. And if it is asked, whether the concept exists first, and the sign comes afterwards, I should say No; the two are simultaneous: but in strict logic, the sign, being the condition of a concept, may really be said to come first. After a time, words may be dropt, and it is then, when we try to remember the old word that gave birth to our concept, that we are led to imagine that concepts come first, and words afterwards.

Berkeley.

I know from my own experience how difficult it is to see this clearly. We are so accustomed to think without words, that is to say, after having dropt our words, that we can hardly realise the fact that originally no conceptual thought was possible without these or other signs. No strong man, unless he was told, would believe that originally he could not walk without leading-strings. Berkeley seems to have struggled all his life with this problem, and honest as he always is, he gives us the most contradictory conclusions at which he arrived from time to time. It was one of the fundamental principles of his philosophy that

concepts, or what were then called general ideas, are impossible except by attaching a word or sign to a percept, or what he called a particular idea. Hence he knew that concepts were impossible without words, and discursive thought impossible without concepts. But in spite of that he was often very angry with these words, and in the Introduction to his 'Treatise concerning the Principles of Human Understanding' (1710) he wrote: 'Since therefore words are so apt to impose on the understanding [I am resolved in my enquiries to make as little use of them as possibly I can]: whatever ideas I consider I shall endeavour to take them bare and naked into my view, keeping out of my thoughts, so far as I am able, those names which long and constant use have so strictly united with them [1].'

Again, in his Common-place Book (Works, ed. Fraser, vol. i. p. 152), he says: 'If men would lay aside words in thinking, 'tis impossible they should ever mistake, save only in matters of fact. I mean it seems impossible they should be positive and secure that anything was true which in truth is not so. Certainly I cannot err in matter of simple perception. So far as we can in reasoning go without the help of signs, there we have certain knowledge. Indeed, in long deductions made by signs there may be slips of memory.' Having thus delivered his soul against words—the very signs without which concepts, as he shows, were impossible, or which were at all events strictly united with our thoughts—he breaks forth in another place (vol. iv. p. 455) in the following

[1] The Irish bull, enclosed in brackets, was omitted in the second edition.

panegyric: 'Words (by them meaning all sorts of signs) are so necessary, instead of being (when duly used or in their own nature) prejudicial to the advancement of knowledge, or an hindrance to knowledge, that without them there could in mathematiques themselves be no demonstration.'

It seems to me that most modern philosophers are just in the same state of haziness with regard to the relation between thought and language as Berkeley was; only they are not quite so honest towards themselves. The Bishop, for instance, in another passage of his Common-place Book (vol. iv. p. 429), after having satisfied himself 'that it would be absurd to use words for recording our thoughts to ourselves or in some private meditations,' interpellates himself by adding the following note, 'Is discursive thought, then, independent of language?' He forgot that he had given the answer himself, namely, that it was not and that it could not be.

Process of naming.

Suppose we see the same colour in snow, milk, chalk, and linen. We cannot single it out, take it away or abstract it from the different sensuous objects in which it occurs, unless we have a sign or handle to do it with, and that sign, for all the ordinary purposes of thinking, is a word, such as *white*. Until that word is there, we may have different sensations, but no concepts, not even percepts, in the true sense of the word. It is the electric spark of the word which changes something common to various sensations into a percept, as, afterwards, it changes something common to various percepts into a concept,

and something common to various concepts into a higher concept.

But whence came that electric spark? Where did men find that sign to signify many things; and did not that sign already, in order to be applicable to different perceptions, require something of a comprehensive or conceptual character?

Origin of concepts.

Yes, it did. And here lies the *punctum saliens* of the whole philosophy of language. Long before the question was asked, how man came in possession of words, there was the old question, how man came in possession of concepts. Nearly all philosophers drew the line of demarcation between man and beast at concepts. Up to concepts the two seemed alike.

Then the question arose, How did man alone go beyond percepts and arrive at concepts?

The usual answer was that man possessed some peculiar gift or faculty which enabled him to form concepts, and to comprehend the manifold as one. Even now many philosophers are satisfied with that mythology. But this answer is no answer at all. We might as well say that man began to write because he had the faculty of writing. We want to know what forced man to form concepts, whether he liked it or not. Why should he not have been satisfied with what the senses gave him, with seeing this, with hearing that? Why should he have gone beyond the single images and looked for the general? He might have been very happy in the world of sensations, perceptions, and images. Why should he ever have left it?

What we call the roots of language betray the secret. Almost all of them express, as we saw, the common acts of man. Now before man is conscious as yet of any object, as an object, he cannot help being conscious of his own acts, and as these acts are mostly repeated and continuous acts, he becomes conscious, without any new effort, of his many or repeated acts as one. Here lies the genesis of the most primitive and, I may add, the first inevitable concepts: they consist in our consciousness of our own repeated acts as one continuous action. To rub, for instance, was not only to rub once, and then again, and then again, but it was the continuous act of rubbing, afterwards of smoothing, softening, appeasing; and thus the root, meaning originally to rub, came in time to mean to appease the anger of the gods. There is an uninterrupted chain or development between our saying, Oh God, have mercy! and our earliest ancestors' saying, Be rubbed down, be smooth, be softened, ye gods!

Former theories.

It will now perhaps become clear why the three old theories of the origin of language and thought, the *Pooh-pooh* theory, the *Bow-wow* theory, and the *Yo-heho* theory, completely fail to explain what has to be explained, namely, how conceptual words arose. *Cuckoo* would be an imitation of the sound of the cuckoo, *bow-wow* of the barking of the dog, *pooh-pooh* of our contempt, *yo-heho* of our labour; but with all this we should never get out of the enchanted circle of mere sensuous knowledge. We want conceptual sounds. How can we get them?

Now here the advantage of what I shall call in future the *Synergastic theory* will at once become evident. If, as we know, people in a primitive state accompany most of their common acts by sounds, then the *clamor concomitans* of these acts is not the sign of a single act, but the inseparable accompaniment of our consciousness of our many repeated acts as *one* action. Here we see the first dawn of conceptual thought. If this is once clearly perceived, it will likewise be perceived that the difference between this theory of the origin of conceptual language and the old onomatopoetic theories is not one of degree, but of kind, and marks a greater advance in the Science of Language than the Copernican theory did in the Science of Astronomy. Here lies Noiré's real merit. He was the first who saw that the natural genesis of concepts was to be found in the consciousness of our acts. I was able to give the proof of it by showing that nearly all roots in Sanskrit were expressive of our acts. Those who do not see the difficulties which have to be explained when we ask for the origin of our conceptual roots, may consider the old Pooh-pooh and Bow-wow theories quite sufficient. To the true philosopher the Synergastic theory is the only one which approaches or touches the hem of the problem that has to be solved, namely, how concepts arose, and how concepts were expressed.

The 'clamor concomitans.'

One question only we are unable to answer, namely, why the *clamor concomitans* of the different acts of men, the consciousness of which constituted their first concepts, should have been exactly what it was. Why

in crushing they should have uttered MAR, in carrying VAH, in stretching TAN, in scattering STAR, is beyond our ken. All we can say is that the possibilities in uttering and still more in fixing these sounds were almost unlimited, and that though we may imagine that we perceive some reasonableness in some of them, we very soon come to the end of such speculations.

Who does not imagine that there is some similarity between the root VÂ, to blow, and the sound of our own breathing, or, if we adopt the mimetic theory, the sound of the wind? But if that is so with VÂ, what shall we say to DHAM, to blow, and SVAS, to breathe? That there should be in some cases some vague similarity between the sound of a root and the sound produced by the work which it accompanies is intelligible, and so far the speculations on the supposed inherent meaning of certain letters, which begin as early as Plato's Cratylos, are not without some value. Possibly, if we could go back to an earlier stage in the formation of roots, his speculations might seem still better founded. But we must here too learn to be satisfied with what is within the reach of historical knowledge, or, if we must needs stretch our powers of vision beyond, follow the example of Plato and not assume too serious a countenance.

A few quotations from Plato will serve to make my meaning clear.

'Now the letter R,' he says[1], 'appeared to the imposer of names an excellent instrument for the expression of motion; and he frequently used the letter

[1] *Cratylos*, p. 426.

for this purpose: for example, in the actual words ῥεῖν and ῥοή he represents motion by r; also in the words τρόμος, trembling, τραχύς, rugged; and again, in words such as θραύειν, to crush, κρούειν, to strike, ἐρείκειν, to bruise, θρύπτειν, to break, κερματίζειν, to crumble, ῥύμβειν, to whirl: of all the sorts of movement he generally finds an expression in the letter R, because, as I imagine, he had observed that the tongue was most agitated and least at rest in the pronunciation of this letter, which he therefore used in order to express motion.'

Let us consider these remarks for one moment. Nothing would be easier than to produce an equal number of words in which r occurs, and which express not motion, but rest; for instance, ῥάχις, rib, bone, spine; ῥάχος, a hedge; ῥῑγέω, to freeze; ῥίζα, a root; ῥῡτόν, rein; ῥώννυμι, to strengthen; ῥώσταξ, pillar, &c. Secondly, in several of the words mentioned by Plato the meaning of motion can easily be shown to be secondary, not primary. If κερματίζειν, for instance, means to crumble, to cut into small slices, this is because κέρμα means a small slice, and it does so because it is derived from κείρω, to shave, having been called originally a chip.

But I doubt whether a serious refutation of these remarks is justified. They are useful only as showing what latitude there is and must be in this subject. While modern speculators see an imitation of the blowing of the wind in the root VÂ, Plato sees or rather hears an imitation of what is windy in the sound of the letters φ, ψ, σ, and ζ (l. c., pp. 427, 434), because their pronunciation is accompanied by great expenditure of breath. When Socrates considers

further that the closing and pressure of the tongue in the utterance of d and t was an expression of binding and rest, that l expressed smoothness, g clamminess, n inwardness, we must not forget that Hermogenes is made to reply immediately: 'O Socrates, Cratylos mystifies me; he says that there is a fitness of names, but he never explains what fitness is.'

This is the right spirit in which such guesses should be treated. There may be some truth in them here and there, but even if there is, it is beyond our reach. Custom is so strong that we all imagine we perceive a certain appropriateness in a root STA meaning to stand or stop, in a root MAR meaning to rub, in a root TUD meaning to strike. There may be some truth in that fancy, but if we take a more comprehensive view of radical sounds and radical meanings, not only in the Aryan but likewise in the Semitic and Turanian languages, we soon find that our fancy is as often contradicted by the facts as it is confirmed by them. There seems to be neither necessity nor absolute freedom in the choice of the sounds expressive of our acts. Even those who imagine that they can detect some reasonableness in them, must confess that they have no means of testing or proving it. We can well understand that among the concomitant clamours of thought the struggle for existence must have been intense, though we have hardly any opportunities left for watching that struggle. If some scholars imagine they can know, or feel, why SAR expressed our consciousness of moving on, while VABH expressed our consciousness of weaving, we need not contradict them, but we could easily show that in other families of speech the same sounds have a totally different

meaning. Take, for instance, the root SAR in Finno-Ugric. It means [1],

(1) to sprout forth, to bubble up, to rise; to be long, to be slim, to be straight;

(2) to stir, to awake, to be busy;

(3) to rub, to wipe, to whet, to shear;

(4) to stir, to mix; to make variegated, to grind, to defile;

(5) to push away, to squeeze, to narrow, to break, to split, to wound; to suffer, to be oppressed, to shrink, to die;

(6) to speak, to narrate.

Though Professor Donner, the highest authority on Finnish philology, treats all these meanings as modifications of one central concept, he would probably be willing to admit that possibly such meanings as to speak or to narrate might flow from an independent source, and have nothing in common with such concepts as sprouting, bubbling, stirring, and all the rest; but other scholars might insist on babbling being but a modification of bubbling, and spouting of sprouting. Here, if anywhere in the study of language, much latitude must be allowed to personal dispositions and idiosyncrasies. We may be able to form a general idea how what we call roots survived in a conflict of ever so many possibilities, but we shall never be able to discover anything like necessity in the character of those historical roots which have been discovered by an analysis of real languages or families of language.

The conceptual foundation of Language.

But what is no longer a theory or a mere dream,

[1] Donner, *Vergleich. Wörterb. der Finnisch-Ugrischen Sprachen*, ii. p. 1.

but a simple fact, is that all our words are derived from these conceptual roots, and that all or nearly all of them signify originally some primitive acts of man. These are facts, and the only thing we have to supply is an explanation why language should have started from such roots, and not from the imitation of the sounds of nature. I do not go so far as other scholars in denying the possibility of any words being formed from mimetic sounds. After all, *cuckoo* is a word, though perhaps not in the strictest sense. To *hush* is a word which has come to express a concept. The same process which yielded such words might have been carried much further, so far as we know. But the fact remains that it was not, and what we have to explain is not what language might have been, but what it is. That roots expressing acts should have been the true feeders of language becomes intelligible when we consider that the earliest possible, or, I should say, the earliest inevitable concepts could not well have arisen under more natural and favourable circumstances than from our consciousness of our own repeated acts. Even man's bodily organism, his possessing two arms, two legs, two eyes, two ears, would have helped towards making him comprehend two as one; and the Dyad is the beginning of all that we call conceptual thought. Then would follow the consciousness of our own repeated continuous acts, and if such acts, particularly when performed in common, were accompanied by natural sounds, by sounds understood therefore by many people, the battle was won. Man knew what it was to have concepts and intelligible signs of concepts at the same time. Everything else, as we know from the

history of language, would then follow as a matter of course.

We can see all this historical growth of language from its very beginning, most clearly in the Aryan languages, because they have been analysed most carefully. But the Semitic languages also tell us the same tale, only that here the formation of triliteral roots prevents us often from watching the earliest phases in the growth of roots and radical concepts. Triliteral roots must have been originally biliteral, or monosyllabic, but though this can be proved in some cases, it cannot yet be done with perfect certainty in all. Here we must wait for new light from the most ancient Babylonian Inscriptions.

With the Finno-Ugric languages great progress has been made of late. Professor Donner, in his Comparative Dictionary of the Finno-Ugric Languages, is doing for that branch of human speech what others have done for the analysis of the Aryan and Semitic languages. The number of roots seems smaller here than in Sanskrit or Hebrew, and the growth and ramification of subsequent meanings become therefore all the more instructive.

Other families or classes of language have as yet been analysed with partial success only, still wherever a beginning has been made, the result has always been the same, and we may take it as a fundamental principle, admitted by all students of language in whatever part of the world, that in the beginning there were roots and radical concepts, and that with these roots human speech was built up from beginning to end.

There are languages, like the ancient Chinese, in

which words and roots are identical, at least in outward appearance, where all is material, and nothing, as yet, purely formal. In such languages, whatever their age may be, we have again a tangible proof of the theory which we formed for ourselves, from an analysis of more developed languages, such as Sanskrit and Hebrew, namely that language begins with roots and thought with concepts, and that the two are one.

Our conceptual world.

When the human mind had once reached the conceptual stage, the battle was won, an entrance into the ideal world had been effected. With the first real word, a new world was created, the world of thought, our real home.

When we have once seen that thought, in its true sense, is always conceptual, and that every word is derived from a conceptual root, we shall no longer be surprised when we are told that words, being conceptual, can never stand for a single percept. There can be nothing in the world of sense corresponding even to such simple words as dog, tree, apple, table, to say nothing of colour, virtue, goodness and all the rest, for they are all conceptual. We can never expect to see a dog, a tree, an apple, or a chair. Dog means every kind of dog from the greyhound to the spaniel; tree every kind of tree from the oak to the cherry; apple every kind of apple from the pine-apple to the pippin; chair every kind of chair from the royal throne to the professorial chair. People often imagine that they can form a general image of a dog, by leaving out what is peculiar to every individual dog, or to every kind of dog. Let them try

the experiment, which Mr. Galton has tried for human faces, namely, photograph a greyhound, and over it a spaniel, and then a St. Bernard, and then a Scotch terrier, and so on till every breed has been superadded. They will then see what kind of general image they would arrive at, and they will strongly object to harbouring such monsters in their mind.

Here also Berkeley acted as a most resolute pioneer. He showed that it is simply impossible for any human being to make to himself a general image of a triangle, for such an image would have to be at the same time right-angled, obtuse-angled, acute-angled, equilateral, isosceles, and scalene. This is impossible, whereas it is perfectly possible to have an image of any single triangle, to name some characteristic feature common to all triangles, namely their possessing three angles, and thus to form a name and at the same time a concept of a triangle. This mental process which Berkeley described so well as applied to modern concepts, we can watch with regard to all, even the most primitive concepts, if we examine the annals of language. Man discovered in a smaller or larger number of trees, before they were as yet trees to him, something which was interesting to him and which they all shared in common. Now trees were interesting to primitive man for various reasons, and they could have been named for every one of these reasons. For practical purposes, however, trees were particularly interesting to the primitive framers of language, because they could be split in two, cut, shaped into blocks and planks, shafts and boats. Hence from a root dar, to *tear*, they called trees dru or dâru, lit. what can be split or torn or cut to pieces.

From the same root they also called the skin δέρμα, because it was torn off, and a sack δόρος, because it was made of leather (Sanskrit d*ri*ti), and a spear, δόρυ, because it was a tree, cut and shaped and planed.

Such words being once given, they would produce ever so many offshoots. The Gauls called their priests *Druides*[1], the Irish *drui*, literally the men of the oak-groves. The Greeks called the spirits of the forest-trees *Dryades*; and the Hindus called a man of wood, or a man with a wooden, or, as we say, flinty heart, dâr*u*n*a*, cruel.

What applies to this single word for tree, applies to all words. They are all derived from roots, they are all conceptual, they all express something common to many things, and therefore something that can be thought of and spoken of, but can never be perceived with our senses as a single and real object.

If then we think in words, and in words only, is there anything in the world, I will not say now, more wonderful simply, but more momentous, more serious, more paramount for all our intellectual work than our words? And if that is so, need we wonder that religion also has its deepest roots in language, nay would be perfectly inconceivable without language. It has often been said that *numina* are *nomina*, and if our line of argument hitherto has been straight, we shall not only accept this statement, but understand its true meaning. Try to realise *Zeus* or *Hera* without their names, and you will see that there is nothing to realise. But do not let us say therefore that *Zeus* and *Hera* are mere names. This expression, *mere names*, is one of the most objectionable and self-con-

[1] *Hibbert Lectures*, John Rhys, p. 221.

tradictory expressions in the whole dictionary of philosophy. There is no such thing as a *mere name*, as little as there is a *mere concept*. There is something that was meant by *Zeus* and even by *Hera*, and though these names were weak, and tentative only, and exposed to all the dangers of mythology, yet the best among the Greeks never forgot what the name of Zeus was really intended for—the Infinite, it may be, the nameless Power behind all names. You all remember the words of Aeschylus in the Chorus of the Agamemnon—for who that has read them can ever forget them again:—

'Zeus, *whoever he is*, if this be the name by which he loves to be called—by this name I address him. For if I verily want to cast off the idle burden of my thought, proving all things, I cannot find any on whom to cast it, except Zeus alone[1].'

Aeschylus knew or divined what we want to prove, that religion is the language or interpretation of the Infinite. There may be nothing corresponding to Zeus, as pictured by Phidias, and as believed in by the people of Greece. But Zeus was not a *mere name*, for all that. It was but one out of many names by which the Greeks, and, as we shall see, not the Greeks only, but all the Aryas, tried to grasp the Infinite behind the Finite, tried to name the Unknown by the Known, tried to see the Divine behind the veil of nature.

[1] *Lectures on the Science of Language*, ii. 485.

LECTURE XV.

DYNAMIC STAGE.

Lessons of Language.

WE ask to-day, What can language teach us with regard to the origin of religion? We have seen that nothing can be more ancient than language. Myth is but a modification of language. Our sacred books are language in its highest development. Our customs and traditions are often founded on decayed and misunderstood words. If therefore we can decipher the original meaning of our words, if we can discover the purpose with which they were framed, we shall have opened archives which, by their antiquity at all events, are far superior to any other evidence within our reach.

Now let us remember what I tried to explain in my last Lecture, that the Aryan languages have been reduced to about 800 roots. The Semitic and Turanian languages also have been submitted to the same process and have yielded a very similar result. But though many of the observations which we are going to make with regard to the Aryan languages apply with equal force, though *mutatis mutandis* to other languages also, I shall in these lectures concentrate my attention chiefly on our own family of speech, and only occasionally glance at other families for confirmation or modification of our results.

Roots express our acts.

Let us remember, secondly, that most of the Aryan roots expressed originally our own acts, acts mostly performed in common, continuous acts, and acts the consciousness of which would by necessity produce the first conceptual stratum of thought in the human mind. Philosophers seem to imagine that concepts are something so natural that they require no explanation at all. We see white in snow, milk and chalk, they say, and we thus form the concept of white. Yes, if we once have learnt to grasp, we can grasp anything—but the real question is, how for the first time we come to grasp, how nature, without any conscious effort of our own, teaches, nay forces us to grasp. It was Noiré who showed us how this took place. It was the consciousness of our own repeated acts which for the first time called out our intellectual grasp, and made us, whether we liked it or not, grasp, comprehend, conceive many acts as one, and after a time, many results of such acts as one. The consciousness of our own repeated strokes, blows, knocks, taps, slaps, pushes and impulses would become, without any conscious effort of our own, the first germ of conceptual thought. During the early phase of thought when this is supposed to have happened, when the first consciousness of our own repeated acts assumed a conceptual character, will, act and knowledge were as yet one and undivided, and the whole of our conscious knowledge was subjective, exclusively concerned with our own voluntary acts. Man could say 'strike' in the sense of 'We strike' or 'I strike,' long before he could speak of what he struck, of what struck him, of the instrument with

which he struck, or of the place in which striking and fighting took place. Thought, therefore, in the true sense of the word, began, so far as we can see, with a consciousness of voluntary acts, and not, as has often been supposed, with consciousness of passive states, much less, as yet, of an objective world.

Some acts conceived as states or as passive.

Many acts, however, which seem to us voluntary, were not so, or at all events were not at first conceived as such. To us, 'to hear,' for instance [1], seems a voluntary act; to the earliest framers of our language it seemed a passive state. 'I hear' was to them 'I am moved,' 'I am struck by something.' To see also was originally to be moved or affected by something, just as to burn or to suffer pain was to be burnt by fire. It was only after a time that *to see* became *to look*.

We saw, thirdly, that, as most of these primitive acts were accompanied by almost involuntary utterances, we could thus understand how that *clamor concomitans* became the natural and the intelligible sign of the acts, or rather of our consciousness of the acts, which had called them out. What the particular noise was, depended on accident, or if not an accident, at all events on causes which we cannot understand.

Subjective acts predicated of other agents.

We have now to see whether we can, to a certain extent at least, understand the steps which led from these expressions of every possible kind of human activity with which man in an early state of society was familiar, to the expression of purely objective thought or of concepts of an objective world.

[1] *Science of Thought*, p. 324.

It cannot be said too often that in researches of this kind we must not look for absolute certainty. All we can do is to suggest what is possible, because intelligible; but we must always be prepared for other suggestions equally intelligible and therefore equally possible.

When man had arrived at expressing such acts as striking, and predicating them of himself, whether by demonstrative gestures or by demonstrative pronouns, when he was able to say Strike-we and Strike-I, he was naturally led on to say, if only for the sake of a fair distribution of labour, Strike-you, Strike-thou. Another step [1] would lead the early speakers to such utterances as 'he strikes,' or 'they strike,' utterances which, though they may have required a greater effort than the mere 'We strike' or 'I strike,' could hardly fail to be called forth by the simple intercourse of hunters, warriors, or diggers of the soil. They involved no more than the transference of our acts or states to persons in every respect like ourselves.

Subjective acts predicated of objects.

But we have now to consider a far more momentous step. Man was in possession of roots which enabled him to express the consciousness of his own acts. He might speak of himself as a striker or digger, and of other beings like himself as strikers or diggers. He had learnt to think and express acts and actors, but as yet nothing else. While in this state of mind, let us ask, what could he do when he wished to speak of animals, and particularly of those who were his daily companions? He could only treat

[1] *Science of Thought*, p. 326.

them as actors, as actors like himself, and thus call the horse his runner, the dog his watcher, the cow his nurse, the bull his man, the mouse his thief, the serpent a creeper or a throttler. It was this necessity of language and of thought which brought the animals near to him and preserved that intimacy between man and beast which has survived in the animal fables of so many countries.

But what was to be done with other objects of nature, such as trees, rivers, mountains, sky, sun, and moon? They too, if our theory is right, could only be named and conceived in the same way. They had to submit to the various categories of activity for which expression had been found. To us this seems very natural, but this small step from 'He digs' to 'It digs' amounted really to the creation of a new world of thought, the *objective*, as distinguished from the *subjective* world.

What is of the greatest importance, however, is this, that, as in the case of the first formation of concepts, so here in the first formation of what we now call mythology, but what was really a perfectly natural stage of thought, and almost a necessity of language, we should clearly see its inevitable character. At that time man knew as yet one kind of being only, namely his own, one kind of language only, namely that which expressed his own subjective acts and his own subjective states, and those of his fellow-workers. What then could he predicate of outward objects except some kind of activity like his own, and what language could he apply to them except that which he had formed to express his own acts and his own states? When he saw the lightning tearing a hole in his field, what

could he say but that the digger had dug a hole? When he saw the wind grinding branches together till they caught fire, what could he say but that the grinder, whom he might possibly call Prometheus, in Sanskrit pramantha, had ground out fire, just as man himself ground out sparks by rubbing two fire-sticks till they spurted out flames? What we now call lightning was in that stage of thought, tearing, digging, bursting, sparkling there and then. What we now call storm or wind, was with the earliest speakers and thinkers 'smashing, grinding, hurling, blowing there and then.'

Dynamic Stage.

As soon as this new mental act was performed, and performed not intentionally, but, and this is again the important point, inevitably, a new world was called into existence, a world of names, or as we now call it, the world of myth. Whatever had to be called and conceived, had to be conceived as active, had to be called by means of roots which expressed originally the consciousness of our own acts. There was no other way open as yet by which nature could be reached, and hence a whole stratum of language was formed which I should like to call the *dramatic*, but that I fear I might be misunderstood, and which therefore I prefer to call *dynamic*. All that had to be expressed had to be changed into actors, and hence the name *dramatic* would have been very appropriate. But as there was also an easy transition from actors to powers, whenever the human and personal characteristics of actors were allowed to vanish, or possibly had never been called out into definite prominence, *dynamic* will be as useful a name.

In this inevitable dynamic stage of thought and language we have the true key to all those processes which go by the names of *Animism*, *Anthropomorphism*, *Personification*, etc.

Animism.

It was the fashion to say that primitive man in a poetical mood ascribed life to all things by which he found himself surrounded and affected. This peculiar tendency was called in German *beseelen*. *Beseelen*, however, could mean two things; either simply *animare*, to endow with life, or *mente et ratione instruere*, to endow with mind and reason. It is true that these two ideas often run together, and that a poet, if he once ascribed life to a tree, might soon represent it also as not only feeling, but likewise as thinking and reasoning. Still for philosophical purposes it would be well to distinguish between the two. Unfortunately there is the same ambiguity in the English rendering, viz. *animism*. Animism, we are told, consists 'in our endowing the phenomena of nature with personal life[1].' But what is meant here by personal life? Is it simply the individual life of a bird, or does it include all we mean by our own personality? We may ascribe life to a river and speak of living water, without as yet ascribing perception, much less thought and reason, to such phenomena of nature. If to ascribe life to lifeless things is Animism, then to ascribe mind to mindless things should be distinguished by some other name, such as *Intellectism*. What is still more misleading in the name of Animism is that, besides having been used long ago as a name

[1] *Fortnightly Review*, 15th Aug. 1884.

of Stahl's theory of an *Anima mundi*, it has recently been appropriated as a name of the belief in the existence of spirits as apart from matter and in a spiritual world generally.

If *Animism* could be restricted once more to the conception of inanimate beings as animate, it might hold its own place by the side of *Personification*, which would be the conception of non-personal beings as personal, and *Anthropomorphism*, which would be the conception of non-human beings as human.

But we should clearly see that all these are but names, it may be, useful names, if only properly defined, but that by themselves they explain nothing. To say that to look upon a river as animated is Animism is pure tautology. We state a fact, but we do not even attempt to explain it. The dynamic theory, on the contrary, shows how these processes arose; nay, it shows that, given language such as it was during that early stage, it was inevitable. When man could as yet predicate acts only, the subjects of his predications became necessarily actors, capable of performing the acts ascribed to them.

It is here where we perceive the importance of the discovery that nearly all roots, that is to say, nearly all the elements of our thought, express actions. It is here where the Science of Language is recognised as the true foundation of the Science of Mythology, and hereafter, of Religion.

Before we examine the familiar cases of dynamic conception and naming in the Aryan world, it may be well to glance at other countries and other languages in order to see whether the same process which we have traced back to the nature of our

Aryan roots, can be discovered elsewhere, and thus confirm the theory we have propounded.

Egypt.

Turning first to Egypt we find that Mr. Le Page Renouf, in his thoughtful *Hibbert Lectures*, faces the problem which so few students of religion have the sense to face, namely, the real meaning belonging to words which we are accustomed to translate by God. In order to show you what I mean, let me by anticipation give you one illustration. You know that the Latin *deus*, god, corresponds to the Sanskrit deva. I shall say nothing about the Greek θεός, for such is the conscientiousness of modern etymology that any connection between *deus* and θεός is now denied, because it is impossible as yet to account for a Greek θ in the place of a Sanskrit and Latin *de*. But anyhow the presence of deva in Sanskrit and of *deus* in Latin shows that this word existed before what I call the Aryan Separation, the date of which lies so far back that few scholars would be so hardy, not to say foolhardy, as to attempt to fix it chronologically.

However, the mere presence of this name for god in Sanskrit and Latin would not teach us very much. It would be curious, perhaps more than merely curious, that these two languages should have the same word for god; but the question of real interest, how they came to have the same word for God would remain unanswered. It is here where a study of language steps in to solve the riddle. *Deus* in Latin means god and nothing but god. But deva in Sanskrit means first bright and brilliant. The sun, the dawn, the sky, the day, all are deva in the sense

of bright, from the same root which yielded in Sanskrit Dyaus, sky, and *Zeus* in Greek. Here then we catch a glimpse of the origin of the concept of god. It was because all these beneficent and joyful phenomena had been called deva, bright, that, after dropping the phenomena of which it could be predicated, deva itself remained with the meaning of brightness, raised to the more general and higher concept which now belongs to it, namely deity. Poets would address the sun, the sky, the morning, and all the bright phenomena of nature, as the bright ones, the Devas, and these bright ones, these Devas, would without any further effort become the Devas, the bright ones, that is, what were to them their gods.

Let us now return to Egypt.

One of the words for god in Egyptian is *nutar*, and, as Mr. Renouf remarks, no one can deny that *nutar* is rightly translated by God. But how is it possible to bring the 'One God, the self-existent, the unbegotten' (p. 89), under the same category with the innumerable deities that constitute the old Egyptian pantheon? If the one is *nutar*, how can all the others be called likewise *nutar*? The confusion of thought which arises even among us by the promiscuous use of *god* for the Supreme Being, a being without a second, a being without body, parts and passions, and likewise for the innumerable gods of ancient and modern systems of religion, is very great. This, however, concerns historical students of religion only. But when the predicate of god, of deva, *deus*, *θεός*, involved the most momentous practical questions, the mischief done by the promiscuous use of such words affected much more vital interests.

We shall be able to trace the various channels through which the Sanskrit deva passed from meaning bright to meaning god; and Mr. Renouf has enabled us to catch at least a glimpse of a similar process in ancient Egypt.

Nutar, he tells us, the Coptic *nuti*, is closely allied with another word *nutra*, and the original meaning of these words is found in the Coptic *nomti*, which, as an adjective, means *strong*, as a substantive *power*, as a verb *to protect*. *Nutar*, therefore, would express the ideas of active, strong, mighty, very mighty, almighty, divine. It would thus illustrate the very phase of thought and language which we are considering, a phase during which, as we saw, man could lay hold of the surrounding world by active verbs only. Mr. Renouf translates *nutar* by power, and compares it with the Hebrew *el* (p. 96). The Egyptian *Nutar nutra*, the powerful power, would correspond to the Hebrew *El Shaddai*, i. e. *El*, the strong. The Egyptian *nutar*, however, never became a proper name, 'but it was applied indifferently to each of the powers which the Egyptian imagination conceived as active in the universe, and to the Power from which all powers proceed. *Horus* and *Râ* and *Osiris* and *Set* are names of individual finite powers, but beside these a Power without a name and without any mythological characteristics, is constantly referred to in the singular number.'

Here then, in a country unconnected with India, in a language of a totally different texture from that of the Aryan languages, we are brought face to face with intellectual results which harmonise perfectly with our theory of a *dynamic* period, and so far may be

said to confirm it. The gods of Egyptian mythology represent the real powers of the universe, and the power that was discovered behind all these powers became there, from the earliest times, the seed of a monotheistic faith.

Semitic Names.

Let us now turn to the Semitic world, the earliest traces of which have lately been discovered in the Cuneiform Inscriptions of Babylon and Assyria. Here too I shall chiefly follow another Hibbert Lecturer, Professor Sayce, who in his lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion as illustrated by the religion of the ancient Babylonians (1887) may be supposed to give us the last reliable results of this branch of Oriental study. It must, of course, be understood that all these researches, whether in Egypt or in Babylon, and to a certain extent in India also, are constantly progressive. We can do no more than accept with certain reservations what by some of the most hard-working scholars is considered as firmly established at present. But we must always be ready to welcome new light, new facts and new theories, and while willing to recognise the uncertainty of much of what we believe to be certain at present, be grateful for the immense progress that has been made during the age in which we live.

In Babylonia the number of so-called gods is enormous. Without attempting to find out how many of them are Pre-Semitic, or Accadian, and how many are purely Semitic,—for I am afraid this cannot be done as yet with any real success,—the decipherers of the Cuneiform Inscriptions tell us that, according to Assur-natsir-pal, there were 65,000 great gods of

heaven and earth (Sayce, p. 216). In other places we are told that while the background of this vast pantheon was filled with the obscure deities and spirits of the ancient Accadian cult, whose names survived in magical charms and exorcisms, the air above was occupied by the '300 spirits of heaven,' and the earth below by 'the 600 spirits of the earth.'

If these beings are called gods, it must be quite clear that the term is used in a sense totally different from that which it has when applied to the supreme deity or to the gods who created heaven and earth. These Babylonian gods were probably no more than the so-called *Zi*, or supernatural powers. The *Zi*, according to Professor Sayce (p. 327), 'was simply that which manifests life, and the test of the manifestation of life was movement. Everything that moved, or seemed to move, was endowed with life, for only in this way could primitive man explain the fact.'

From our point of view we should say that with primitive man it was not at first a question of how to explain movement, but how to call it. Anything that moved could be called in one way only, namely by speaking of it by means of ancient roots which, as we saw in the Aryan languages at least, expressed the acts and movements of primitive men.

Professor Sayce expresses the same idea when he continues: 'Man himself moved and acted because he had life; life, therefore, was the cause of movement. Hence the objects and forces of nature were all assigned a *Zi* or spirit. The arrow that flew through the air, the stone that struck and injured, the heavenly bodies that moved across the sky, the fire that blazed up from the ground devouring all

that fell in its way, had all alike their spirits. The spirits were as innumerable as the objects and forces which surrounded the Chaldean, and as mysterious and invisible as his own spirit and life.'

All this is perfectly intelligible if we apply to the Semitic mythology and religion the same key, the key of language, which unlocks the secrets of the earliest creations of the Aryan mind. What we know of this early Semitic phase of thought, with a possible background of Accadian thought, is probably the oldest stratum which the shaft of the archæologist will ever reach. But even thus it presupposes many earlier strata; and the question whether this mythological phraseology, without as yet any moral element in it, was contemporaneous with a religious phraseology full of moral import, is one which we can never hope to solve by historical evidence. Psychologically the purely dynamic stage of language and thought might seem to be the necessary antecedent of a later religious development. One or more of these *Zi* or powers might seem to have been raised in time to a higher and in the end to a supreme position. But we know, as a matter of fact, that a belief in numberless powers or spirits may really co-exist with a belief in one Supreme Being; and we must never forget, in researches of this kind, that the soil from which language, myth, and religion spring is never a uniform soil. As it is now, so it has been from the beginning. Temples have always been open to the young and to the old, to the sage and to the fool, and the real presence of the Divine has been taken in as different senses as it is now, from the grossly

material to the sublimely spiritual. Nor is it necessary that the human mind should always pass through the same stages of development in order to arrive at the same result. The eye of a child may often see what is hidden to the mind of a sage, and the sudden visions of genius do not submit to chronological measurement. Yet, if we want to understand the different strata of thought, we have a right to proceed logically rather than chronologically, and from that point of view we have a right to say that the purely dynamic stage comes first, the religious and moral stage come second.

Finland.

Having examined Egypt and Babylon, we have now to see how far some of the Ural-altaic languages confirm or invalidate our belief in the necessity of a dynamic stratum of language, and therefore of mythology.

One of the most advanced representatives of Turanianism, whether in language, mythology, religion and literature, is no doubt the Finnish; and here we have the advantage of possessing the trustworthy observations of real scholars, and more particularly of Castrén.

Castrén, in his lectures on Finnish Mythology, gives us a full account of the so-called deities of the air, the water, the earth, and the nether-world. These we shall have to consider hereafter. What interests us in the present stage of our inquiry, and as throwing light on the dynamic period of language and thought, is his account of the *Haltias*. I shall quote his own words, but I believe that if we could always

substitute the term *powers* for what he calls *haltiæ* or deities or spirits, we should enter more fully into the state of mind which gave form and shape to these *haltias*.

'Every object in nature,' he writes (p. 105), 'must have a tutelary deity, a *haltia*, a genius. This Haltia was its creator and had to take care of it. These Haltias, however, were not tied to every single finite object, but free, personal beings, moving by themselves, and possessed of form and shape, of body and life. Their existence did not depend on the existence of each single object, for though in nature no object was without its Haltia, their activity was by no means restricted to a single individual, but extended to the whole genus or species. This mountain-ash, this stone, this house, had its own Haltia, but the same Haltias care also for other mountain-ashes, other stones, other houses. The single ash therefore, the single stone, the single house may vanish, and yet their Haltias would continue for ever in the genus.

'At an earlier period the Fins worshipped natural objects in their visible form. They paid such worship to the forest, for instance, either in its totality or in part, but always under a personal form. Thus we read in the Kalevala, Rune 7, v. 282:—

'"Be gracious, O grove; be mild, O wilderness; be moved, O mild Tapio. . . ."

'Samoyedes, Ostjakes, and several more of the nomadic tribes of Siberia have no real concept of any personal divine being ruling over the forest, but wherever they meet on their tunders a small grove of larches or firs, they pay it what we are accustomed to call divine honours, and erect in it their idols. . . .

Other tribes ascribe a divine personality to the forest itself, and speak of a mighty forest-god who generally, like the water-god, is represented as a hostile being.'

All these ideas, which are generally disposed of by such names as Animism and Personification, which explain absolutely nothing, become perfectly intelligible, nay, what is far more important, they become perfectly inevitable during that phase of language which I called the Dynamic. If people took any interest in these objects of nature, if they wished to predicate anything at all of them, they could only do it in one way, namely by means of their active roots.

To say that a tree by being called a feeder became a deity, is mixing up two very remote phases of thought. The ancient people themselves, though they had forgotten the real origin of these active powers, distinguished nevertheless between them and their gods. The Fins, for instance, kept the term *Jumala* to signify an embodied being, while *Haltia* was to them more of a spirit-like power. No doubt, it was impossible for them to conceive of spirits without some kind of shape or body (pp. 178, 189, 209), and hence their conceptions of *Haltias* varied with different poets and different teachers. Some of the *Haltias* became loved or dreaded, some received worship, others were pacified by offerings. At last, when everything else had received its *Haltia*, man also was believed to be possessed of a *Haltia*, and thus the human activity which man had transferred to the objects of nature returned to himself in a modified form.

I shall read you a prayer from the Kalevala,

addressed to the Haltias of nature, and then a prayer addressed to a man's own Haltia (Castrén, p. 171):—

'Rise, ye men of the sword,
Heroes of the age of the earth,
Rise from the wells, ye bearers of sickles,
From the rivers, ye shooters with bows!
Come, O Forest, with thy men,
Come, O Thicket, with thy hosts,
Old man of the mountain, with thy forces,
Spirit of the water with thy terrors,
Mother of the waters with thy crowds!
Come ye maidens of all the valleys.
Soft-bordered from all springs,
Come to shield this one man!'

When going on the chase, the hunter would invoke his own Haltia (p. 173):

'Rise my being from the cave,
Rise thou Bright-eye[1] from the stones,
Come forth with red cheeks[2],
Thou my spirit from yonder fir-tree!
Put on a shirt of fire!'

Hidatsas in North America.

Having traced the effects of this dynamic stage of language and thought in Egypt, in Babylon, and in Finland, we may glance at one more language which cannot be suspected of consanguinity with any of them, that of the Hidatsa or the Grosventre Indians on the Missouri[3]. These Indians, as Mr. Matthews informs us, worship the 'Great Spirit' or the 'Old Man Immortal,' but they have likewise raised the whole of nature into ever so many powers, or spirits. Whatever is not made by human hands, is conceived as having a power of its own, as being something like man himself. 'Not man alone,' we are told, 'but the sun, the moon, the stars, all the lower animals, all

[1] An epithet commonly given to the bear.
[2] Castrén translates 'with many-coloured cheeks;' the text seems to have 'with darned cheeks.'
[3] M. M., *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 17.

trees and plants, rivers and lakes, many boulders and other separate rocks, even some hills and buttes which stand alone,' are supposed to possess a spirit, or, as they call it, a shade.

To many philosophers this intellectual phenomenon seems to be perfectly natural and to require no explanation beyond what is supplied by such names as Animism, or Anthropomorphism, or Personification, as if these names could help us in the least. But surely, such names do no more than describe the result, they do not throw a ray of light on the springs which produced the result. The real question is why men should not have been satisfied with taking a tree as a tree or a river as a river. Their eyes gave them no more, their mind required no more. We ourselves require neither Egyptian *nutars*, nor Babylonian *zis*, nor Finnish *haltias*, nor Hidatsa *spirits* or *shades* to understand or interpret nature as our senses present it to us. We may call such views of nature poetical, metaphorical, philosophical: but all that does not explain why the ancient nations of the world should have indulged in such metaphors, such poetry, or, if you like, in such philosophy. What we want to know is, what force there was to drive nations of such different characters into one and the same groove? Mr. Matthews seems to me to have come nearest to the truth, when he ascribes this phase of thought to what he calls an individualising tendency, to a wish to treat each natural object as a subject. But the Science of Language allows us a deeper insight still, and shows us that what we call a tendency of the human mind, was in reality a dire necessity of human speech.

Growth of Language.

These natural objects had to be named at a period in the growth of language when man possessed as yet no more than roots expressive of human actions, and whatever had to be named, could be named in one way only, namely as participating in these human actions.

If a man had once been called a striker, a lion also might be called a striker. If an enemy had been called a throttler, a serpent also might be taken hold of by means of the same name.

Then followed a new step. The lightning hissed and struck, the storm pushed and pounded, the river ran and roared. It required no effort of imagination, no animistic metaphors, no anthropomorphic poetry: the downright necessities of language and thought forced man to speak of lightnings, storms and rivers as hissers, strikers, pushers, pounders, runners and roarers, and thus to create their *nutars* in Egypt, their *zis* in Babylon, their *haltias* in Finland, and, in the end, their so-called *gods* everywhere.

Causality.

It is sometimes said that the category of causality which, though we need not call it an innate idea, is nevertheless a *conditio sine quâ non* of all human thought, is really responsible for all these *nutars*, *zis*, and *haltias*. The human mind is so made, we are told, that it must think a *runner* behind the river, a *rainer* behind the rain, a *shiner* behind the sun, a *coverer* behind the night. All this is true, and it is proved by history as well as by philosophy.

But we must be careful not to commit a linguistic anachronism. The very name of cause and causality is far too abstract and far too late to account for this early phase of thought which we have here to account for. Cause, as a concept, did not yet exist, though it may be quite right for us to bring the process of giving these names to different phenomena of nature under the general head of causality. From an historical point of view, however, it is more correct to say that what we in our philosophical language call the category of causality, manifested itself for the first time in this very transference of our own activities to the phenomena of nature. In the simple expression of *I strike*, i. e. 'striking from here,' is involved the first elementary consciousness of cause and effect; *I* or *here* being the cause, *strike* the effect, the two being indissolubly united in the consciousness of my own act. So again, when I say 'he strikes,' I conceive what we now call a causal connection between the agent and the act. When the ancient nations spoke of a *rainer*, not yet of *rain*, they produced by their language and thought, whether they liked it or not, an active, living power, a something like ourselves. We, at our time of history, may call this something a cause: to them it was a doer, an actor, a somebody who could be grasped by means of the only intellectual tools which were then forthcoming, by means of active verbs.

Objections answered.

I am not surprised that this theory, which recognises in language the key to all the apparent vagaries of early thought, should have met with strong opposition.

So long as the real identity of thought and language had not been grasped, so long as people imagined that language is one thing and thought another, it was but natural that they should fail to see the real meaning of treating mythology, if not as a disease, at all events as an inevitable affection of language. If the active verb were merely a grammatical, and not at the same time a psychological, nay an historical fact, it might seem absurd to identify the active meaning of our roots with the active meaning ascribed to the phenomena of nature. But let it be once perceived that language and thought are one and indivisible, and nothing will seem more natural than that what, as the grammarian tells us, happened in language, should, as the psychologist tells us, have likewise happened in thought;—that the two events, in fact, should prove to be one and the same.

It may be said, however, that the product of this dynamic stage of language and thought are not yet mythological, much less religious. This is perfectly true. We have accounted for such names as runner for river, striker for lightning, smasher for storm; we have accounted for agents, but not yet for human agents. If we were satisfied with high-sounding names, we should say that this further step was accounted for by anthropomorphism, which really means that it was accounted for by what we have to account for. Here also language supplies the real solution. If striker meant generally a man who strikes, what was more natural than to transfer all that striker meant, that is to say, a human body, a pair of human arms, human will and passions too, to the storm when it had once been called a striker? Language performed

the miracle, only in the most natural way, and when this train of thought had once been opened, the tendency of analogy would soon spread it over the whole field of human experience.

Still we must not allow ourselves to be misled by language. People might speak of the moon as a measurer [1], or of the river as a roarer, but we must not suppose that they saw no difference therefore between a man who measured a field, or a woman who roared in the forest, and the moon when they called it Mâs [2], the measurer, and the river when they called her Nadî, a roarer, as a feminine. They used words which might mean human beings performing these acts, but which might also be placed in a different focus, so that a portion only of their possible meaning was lighted up, while the rest remained dim and dark. The important lesson which the Science of Language teaches us is that everything that was named was at first named as active, then as personal, and almost human. When even a stone was a cutter, a tooth a grinder, a gimlet a borer, the difficulty was not how to personify, but how to dispersonify. Masculine nouns came first, then feminine; last of all neuters.

Gender.

And here we must guard against another very common mistake. Those who are unable to appropriate all that follows from the identity of language and thought, have nevertheless been ready to admit

[1] M. M., *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 193.

[2] It is surely mere folly to say that Sk. mâs cannot be derived from the root mâ, to measure, but must have meant originally shining. Μήν and μήνη, Goth. *mêna*, come from the same root as Sk. mâ-na, measure, μέ-τρον.

that the gender of nouns has been a powerful element in the production of mythology. It has even been admitted that languages which do not distinguish grammatical gender produce a very scanty growth of mythology. This is perfectly true with regard to the later phases of mythology. But at the point which our inquiry has reached at present, what we have to explain is the origin, not the later influence of gender, and this may in itself be called a mythological process. We must remember that even in sex-denoting languages there was a period when this denotation of sex did not yet exist. In the Aryan languages, for instance, some of the oldest words are without gender. *Pater* is not a masculine, nor *mater* a feminine in the grammatical sense of the word. *Pater* and *mater* expressed activities, but they gave no outward indication of sex. The distinction began, not with masculines, but with the setting apart of certain derivative suffixes for females. When *bona* was introduced, *bonus* became masculine, and not *vice versa*. When *puella* was used for girl, *puer*, which formerly meant both boy and girl, became restricted to the meaning of boy. At a still later time certain forms were set apart for things that were to be neither male nor female, so-called neuters, but these had their distinguishing forms generally in the nominative only.

In languages which had adopted this outward distinction of gender, there can be no doubt that gender was productive of new mythology, or at all events that it modified the character of mythology. In German, where the moon has remained masculine and the sun feminine, poets who deal in mythological subjects

often complain of the fetters of language. But in the early stages of language, during which mythology first arose, the powers of nature were conceived as active and therefore as powerful agents, and, when the question of sex arose, as masculine. That masculine character, however, became prominent and outspoken only when agents, distinctly female, were placed by their side. Whenever that happens, whenever we have a female representative of a natural phenomenon by the side of a male representative, the male may almost always be taken as the earlier form.

Dyaus, as a masculine.

To give an instance. Professor Gruppe (p. 79), to whom the identity of Zeus, *Jovis*, O. H. G. *Ziu* (gen. Ziwes) with the Vedic Dyaús is evidently a great stumbling-block, as proving a common belief in a supreme deity before the Aryan Separation, tries to minimise the consequences which follow from this equation by suggesting that in Sanskrit this name was originally a feminine and meant heaven, and that each nation might afterwards have changed the appellative word for heaven into a proper name and the name of a god. He evidently did not observe that in the Veda dyu is first of all a masculine, while in later Sanskrit only it becomes exclusively a feminine. In the Rig-veda forms derived from the base dyu are always masculine, forms derived from the base div are masculine in the singular, in the plural feminine, while forms derived from base dyo or dyav may be masculine and feminine. If, however, we examine the passages in which dyau*h* is feminine in the singular, we shall find that in all of them dyau*h*

means the real sky, mentioned either alone (VI. 17, 9), or together with the earth (I. 22, 3, 57, 5; V. 54, 9; VIII. 40, 4); or together with earth and sky (X. 60, 7 [1]). Wherever Dyaus occurs, not as the visible sky, but as a power, as active or personal, he is always masculine, he is pitâ, the father, by the side of the earth, as mother; he is the father of the Dawn, of Agni, of the two Asvin (day and night), he is in fact Zeus and Jupiter. The sky was conceived as active and as masculine before it sank down to a mere name of the sky, which then, by the analogy of the names for earth, dwindled down to a feminine. The facts therefore are the very opposite of what Prof. Gruppe supposes or wishes them to be.

The mere naming of the sky as an active power, or even as a masculine, might be called a matter of language only, not yet of mythology. But you will see how facile the descensus is from such a word to an incipient myth, nay even to religious ideas. We have watched the origin of Zeus in the Veda, where Dyaus, the same word, is clearly the bright, the warming, the cheering, the enlivening sky, and where Dyaush pitâ, Heaven-father, shows us one of the first steps in Aryan mythology. Remember that this Dyaush pitar is the same as the Greek Ζεὺς πατήρ, and the Latin *Jupiter*, and you will see how this one word shows us the easy, the natural, the almost inevitable transition from the conception of the active sky as a purely physical fact, to the *Father Sky* with all his mythological accidents, and lastly to that Father in heaven whom Aeschylus meant when he burst out in his majestic prayer to 'Zeus, *whosoever he is*.'

[1] On the passage X. 63, 3, see M. M., *Rig-veda Sanhitâ*, vol. i. p. 249.

LECTURE XVI.

MYTHOLOGY.

Myths.

NEXT to language as such, it is myth or mythology which supplies us with materials for the study of Natural Religion.

The outline of the genealogy of languages which I gave you in some of my former lectures will be equally useful for the genealogy of mythology. It will in fact be the chief object of this and the next following lectures to show that what we call myth is a natural and inevitable phase in the development of language; that in its initial stages that phase showed itself before the different languages belonging to the same family had become finally separated, and that therefore, besides much that is peculiar to each, we find in all a common fund of mythology which we may look upon as the earliest stratum likely to contain the germs of religious thoughts.

If we use myth and mythology synonymously, we have the authority of Greek writers for doing so, for mythology (*μυθολογία*) with them does not mean, as it often does with us, a study of myths, but it is used in the sense of a telling of mythic legends, and afterwards of these legends and tales themselves.

Meaning of Mythology.

Few words, however, have of late changed their meaning so completely as myth and mythology. Not very long ago Greek mythology meant Greek religion, Roman mythology meant Roman religion, and each was supposed to consist of a body of traditions and doctrines which a Greek or Roman had to believe, just as Christians believe in the New, or the Jews in the Old Testament. As mythology was taught at school chiefly from manuals, a very general impression prevailed that the legends collected in them existed in this collective form in Greece and Italy, that they formed in fact a complete system, and were known as such by every Greek and Roman, man, woman, and child; the fact being that hardly a single Greek or Roman could have passed an examination in our manuals of mythology, nay that the very names of many of the gods and heroes therein mentioned would have been utterly unknown to the majority of the inhabitants of Greece and Italy.

Etymology of μῦθος.

Before we discuss the meaning which mythology has assumed, chiefly owing to the discovery that myth is a phase of language, inevitable in the early development of speech and thought, it may be well to ask in what sense *μῦθος* was used by the Greeks themselves.

The etymology of *μῦθος* is unknown, or at all events doubtful. It is well to be reminded from time to time how many words there are still in Greek and Latin, to say nothing of Sanskrit, of which we cannot render any etymological account. Of course, we can

guess that μῦθος is derived from μύω, to shut, to close. This is used of shutting the eyes, as in μύωψ, μύωπος, literally closing the eyes, then shortsighted; and it is likewise used of shutting the lips. From this a secondary base might be derived, μυάω, which means to compress the lips, to express contempt. In Sanskrit we have a root mû, to bind, from which mû-ka, dumb, lit. tongue-bound, and likewise Latin *mû-tus*, dumb, and Greek μύ-τις, which Hesychius mentions in the sense of ἄφωνος, as well as μύτης and μυττός. Possibly μυέω, to initiate, to teach secrets, may likewise come from that root, while μύστης and μυστήριον might owe their *s* to analogy. Still it would be strange if μῦθος, word, had meant originally a muttering with closed lips, even though we can appeal to Latin *muttum*, a muttering, *muttire*, or *mutîre*, to mumble. The Gothic *rûna*, secret counsel, has likewise been mentioned as a parallel case, because it is derived from a root RU, to whisper[1].

All we can say is that a derivation of μῦθος from the root mû, to bind, to close, is phonetically possible, and this is more than can be said for another etymology which connects μῦθος with μύζω, to murmur, for in μύζω the final of the root is guttural, not dental, as is shown by μυγμός, muttering.

Though the etymology of μῦθος is somewhat doubtful, its meaning in Greek is clear enough. It means *word* as opposed to deeds, and hardly differs originally from ἔπος and λόγος. Afterwards[2], however, a dis-

[1] Connected with Gothic *rûna* we find the Old Norse *rún*, secret, then the Runic letters. In A. S. we have *rûn*, secret, *rûnian*, to whisper, Med. English *to roun*, which has been changed into *to round*; German *raunen*. The Latin *rumor* too has been traced back to the same cluster of words.

[2] Pind. O. 1, 47; N. 7, 34.

tinction is made between μῦθος in the sense of a story, a fable, and λόγος, an historical account, and this distinction has been preserved in modern times.

Myth, a word.

If the original meaning of the Greek λόγος, as both word and thought, has revealed to us a forgotten truth which must become the foundation of all true philosophy, namely the identity of thought and language, the original meaning of μῦθος, word, will teach us an equally useful lesson for the study of mythology, and indirectly, of religion.

Let us take myth in its original sense, and we shall see that here too the Greeks saw rightly. A myth was at first a word. The formation of such a word as *Eos*, dawn, seems at first sight not very different from the formation of any other word. But if you remember that all roots expressed originally an action, you will see that we require for every word an agent. Now so long as we deal with verbs, we always have our agent; namely, *I*, *thou*, or *he*—I strike, thou strikest, he strikes. But when we have to deal with a word like Eos—who is the agent there?

Eos.

We know that Eos is the Sanskrit Ushas, and we know that ushas is derived from a root VAS, which means to shine. So *Eos* meant originally 'shining-it,' or 'shining-he,' or 'shining-she.' But who was it, or he, or she? Here you have at once the inevitable birth of what we call a myth. What our senses perceive and what we are able to name is only an effect. it is the illumination of the sky, the brightness of the morning, or, as we now should say, the reflection of the

rays of the sun on the clouds of the sky. But such were not the thoughts of the early framers of language. After they had framed a word which meant shining there, or light, namely Eos, they would go on to say, that Eos has returned, Eos has fled, Eos will return, Eos wakens the sleepers, Eos lengthens our life, Eos makes us grow old, Eos rises from the sea, Eos is the daughter of the sky, Eos is followed by the sun, Eos is loved by the sun, Eos is killed by the sun, and so on *ad infinitum*.

Now what is all this? You may say, it is language, it is mythos—yes, and it is what I called the inevitable myth, and a myth that will grow on for ever. For, if Eos is followed by the sun, or, as we should say, if she has the sun for her follower or lover, she would naturally be conceived as a woman, and as a bright and beautiful woman. If she appeared veiled in clouds, she would be conceived as a veiled bride; if she was seen in her naked beauty, she would be celebrated for her brilliant charms. Now let us look at all the epithets which Greek poets have bestowed on Eos, and every one of them will become intelligible. If she is called the daughter of Hyperion, who can doubt that Hyperion, like *Summanus*, was the high heaven? If her mother is called *Euryphaessa*, the wide-shining, do we want an explanation to tell us that that is only another name for the dawn or for the East or for the morning? If she is called the sister of Helios and Selene, is that mythology, or is it plain truth? As the gloaming seemed but a repetition of the dawn, nothing was more natural than to suppose, as the Greeks did, that Eos had followed Helios through the whole of his course, and that she followed

him at last to his watery grave. If Helios or the sun was conceived as driving from East to West, nothing seemed more natural than to assign to Eos also two horses, and to call them Lampros and Phaeton. When chariots were drawn by four horses in Greece, Eos also received four instead of two steeds[1].

Her epithets require hardly any commentary. Αἰγλήεσσα is the brilliant; χαροπή is the joyful-eyed, the Sanskrit haryaksha; χρυσόθρονος is the dawn sitting on a golden throne; ἠριγένεια is the early-born; λευκόπωλος is Eos drawn by white horses; λευκόπτερος, Eos with white wings; φαεσίμβροτος, Eos who brings light to mortals. The rest is added by poets who speak of her as ῥοδοδάκτυλος, rosy-fingered; κροκόπεπλος, clothed in yellow garments; εὐπλόκαμος, with beautiful ringlets; χιονοβλέφαρος, with eyelids white as snow. Latin poets add new epithets, such as *lutea*, rosy; *pallida*, pale; *purpurea*, purple-coloured; *roscida*, dewy; *vigil*, wakeful.

You can see from these epithets, which gathered round the name of *Eos* in Greek, and *Aurora* in Latin, how inevitably what we call mythology springs up from the soil of language. As soon as a name, such as *Eos*, was thrown out, it grew and gathered new materials round itself, and without any special intention or effort became what we call a myth. Even such simple sentences as 'Eos is born,' 'Eos brings light,' 'Eos dies or disappears,' are changed at once into myth, fable, and legend, and it seems impossible to draw a line between what is simple language and what is myth.

[1] Virg. Aen. vi. 535; vii. 26; xii. 77.

Mythology universal.

It was long supposed that much of what we call mythology was due to the peculiar poetical genius of the Greeks. Our first acquaintance with mythology came from Greece, and we were accustomed from our school-days to look upon the Greeks as a nation endowed with such wonderful gifts that we thought we might safely credit them with the invention of all the beauty and wisdom of their mythology. That there were dark sides to that bright picture also, could not be denied; but it was thought possible by classical scholars, unacquainted with the mythology of other nations, that all that was hideous and foolish in classical mythology might be explained as a survival of barbarous ages, when the barbarous ancestors of Greeks and Romans were not above committing themselves those crimes and follies which they fondly ascribed to their gods.

It is here that Comparative Mythology has stepped in, and helped us to solve many difficulties which could not be removed by any other theory.

What is Comparative Mythology?

Comparative Mythology and its three divisions.

Comparative is a name which has been assumed of late by nearly all historical and natural sciences, though, if we once understand the true method and purpose of any single science, it would seem to be almost superfluous to qualify it by that predicate. There is no science of single things, and all progress in human knowledge is achieved through comparison, leading on to the discovery of what different objects share in common, till we reach the widest generalisa-

tions and the highest ideas that are within the ken of human knowledge.

Comparative Philology.

Thus with regard to languages, the very first steps in our knowledge of words are made by comparison. What does grammar consist in but a collection of words which, though they differ from each other, share certain formal elements in common? These formal elements are called grammatical elements, or suffixes, affixes, prefixes, etc., and we are said to know the grammar of a language when we have learnt under what conditions different words undergo the same formal modifications.

Thus comparison leads in the first instance to a grammatical knowledge of a single language.

When, however, we proceed from a study of one to a study of many languages, a new process of comparison begins. We observe that words in different languages undergo the same or nearly the same modifications, and by placing the paradigms of their declension and conjugation side by side, we try to find out on what points they agree and on what points they differ, and we hope thus to discover in the end the reasons why they should agree on certain points, and why they should differ on others.

Comparative Philology deals partly with facts, that is, the differences and coincidences that can be observed in the material and formal elements of language; partly with laws,—using that word in the humble sense of 'something which is true of many objects,' not, as some scholars imagine, in that of *νόμοι ὑψίποδες οὐρανίαν δι' αἰθέρα τεκνωθέντες, ὧν Ὄλυμπος*

πατὴρ μόνος, οὐδέ νιν θνατὰ φύσις ἀνέρων ἔτικτεν. These laws are to account for such peculiarities as give to each language its own distinctive character.

This science of Comparative Philology, however, very soon assumed three different aspects, and was cultivated in three schools, which may be called (1) the *Etymological*, or genealogical, (2) the *Analogical*, and (3) the *Psychological*.

Etymological School.

In comparing such languages as Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit, it was soon found that they were really varieties only of one and the same historical prototype, that they pointed to a common origin, and that all their differences must be accounted for either by *Phonetic Corruption*, or by *Dialectic Growth*. The comparative study of these languages became therefore genealogical, or, in grammatical phraseology, *etymological*.

Starting from a certain number of radical and formal elements (the latter being frequently radical elements of an earlier period), the principal object of the genealogical or etymological school has always been to discover the system according to which these elements were combined into words, and to determine the laws which regulate the phonetic changes of words, either in the same or in different languages. When these laws are sometimes treated as natural laws, this means in reality no more than that they admit of no exception, except such as can again be accounted for by new laws.

Analogical School.

The next school, the *analogical*, or as it might also

be called, the *dialectic*, tries to discover what in the same or in different languages is not *identical*, but yet *analogous*. While the genealogical school looks upon all cognate languages as dialects developed from one ideal κοινή, the dialectic school looks upon each language as the result of a previous independent growth, and is thus able to account for freedom and variety in single languages as well as in whole families of speech, as against the iron laws of phonetic change, established by the etymological school.

It would be impossible, for instance, or at all events undesirable[1], to treat say the Ionic dialect as a corruption of the Aeolic, or the Aeolic as a corruption of the Ionic. The same applies to High German and Low German, to Sanskrit and Prâkrit, to Cymric and Goidhelic. These are all independent streams of language, which it is as hopeless to trace back to one common source, as it is to discover the one small source of the Nile, or even of the Thames. They spring indeed from the same geological stratum, and they follow parallel courses under similar conditions, but they are not yet one stream of water or of speech, kept in by the same shores and moving on in the same bed. Even after their confluence, the peculiar colours of what I call Dialectic Growth remain, and help us to account, whether by true or by false analogy, for that want of uniformity or regularity which the etymological school postulates with unyielding severity.

Thus dvau in Sanskrit, δύω in Greek, *duo* in Latin are phonetic varieties of one and the same type. They are identical in origin, and their differences can be

[1] See *The Science of Language*, vol. i. p. 54 seq.

accounted for by phonetic laws. But Sk. dvitîya, the second, and Greek δεύτερος are not identical in origin. They are dialectic forms, sprung from the same etymological stratum, not the products of one and the same creative act.

Nevertheless, it is in cognate languages only that we could account for such words as Sk. prathama, the first, Greek πρῶτος, Latin *primus*, and Gothic *fruma*. These are all analogous formations, only they must not be treated as varieties of one common prototype. Their differences are not due to the influence of phonetic modification, which can be reduced to a law, but to the freedom of dialectic growth, which must be accepted as a fact.

I go even further. We can hardly doubt, for instance, that the words for *twenty* were formed by a composition of words meaning *two* and *ten*. In Chinese *shĭ* is ten, *eúl* is two, therefore *eúl-shĭ*, twenty. Our own *twenty* comes from Anglo-Saxon *tuén-tig*, which corresponds to the Gothic *tvai tigjus*, and to the modern German *zwanzig*.

In Sanskrit we should expect a form like dvi-dasa, and in Latin *duo-decem*. But instead of this we find in Sanskrit vimsati, in Latin *vîgintî*, in Greek εἴκοσι, and the older form ϝεικατι. According to strict phonetic laws, these forms are all irregular. Dvi does never lose the initial d in Sanskrit, nor does *dvi* in Latin become *vi*, or in Greek εἰ. In Sanskrit dvi ought to have remained; in Greek *dvi* ought to have become δι, in Latin *di* or *bi*. Yet the fact remains that in one of the ancient Aryan dialects dvi was replaced by vi, for thus and thus only can we explain vi in vimsati, εἰ in Greek in εἴκοσι, *vî* in Latin in

vîgintî. The stem for ten or decad, namely dasa or dasat, was shortened to sat[1], which is likewise without any phonetic excuse or analogy.

Here then we see what I call dialectic influence, as different from the independent working of phonetic laws. Vimsati is not a phonetic corruption of *dvi+dasati, nor *vîgintî* of *dvî+decinti, nor ϝεικατι of *δϝι+δεκατι, but they are dialectic forms in which some old compound of twice-ten was fixed and retained, and was afterwards modified according to the peculiar phonetic instincts of Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin.

I cannot enter more fully into this subject at present, but I may remark that it is the disregard of this distinction between phonetic modification and dialectic growth which at the present moment seems to me to have led to a series of misunderstandings between the most prominent representatives of Comparative Philology[2].

Psychological School.

The comparison of various languages, after it had led to the discovery of the great families of human speech and settled the principles according to which cognate languages should be analysed and explained, opened in the end a still wider prospect and disclosed before our eyes, not only what was common to Greek and Latin, to Hebrew and Arabic, to Finnish and Hungarian, but what was common and essential to all languages, what constitutes in fact the nature of language in general, and indirectly the nature of thought.

[1] See *Science of Language*, i. p. 47.

[2] G. Curtius, *Zur Kritik der neuesten Sprachforschung*, 1885; Delbrück, *Die Neueste Sprachforschung*, 1885; Brugmann, *Zum heutigen Stand der Sprachwissenschaft*, 1885.

This kind of study, comparative in the widest sense, though it aimed at the discovery of the highest philosophical truth, does not depend for that discovery on abstract reasoning, but, differing thereby from all former attempts to construct a science of general grammar and of logic, it takes its materials entirely from the facts supplied by that infinite number of languages in which the power of language and thought has become realised. It matters little whether we call this branch of Comparative Philology psychological or ethno-psychological, as long as we see clearly that it aims at explaining that intellectual development which has its outward form in language, and that it derives its materials entirely from a careful study of the different types of human speech, so far as they are still accessible to the student of the present day. To me, that branch of the Science of Language seems almost to transcend the powers of the present generation, and to belong to the future of our race. But I look to it as the final consummation of all that has ever claimed the name of philosophy, as the solution of all psychological, logical, and metaphysical problems, and in the end as the only true key to our knowledge of the Self.

Comparative Mythology.

What applies to Comparative Philology, applies *mutatis mutandis* to Comparative Mythology. I do not mean to say that the science of Comparative Mythology is as yet so firmly established as the Science of Comparative Philology. There is an honest difference of opinion with regard to many minor points, but the fundamental principles of Com-

parative Mythology, such as I tried to lay them down in my first essay on Comparative Mythology in the year 1856, are now generally admitted. I say generally, I do not say universally. There are still some philosophers who deny that the languages of the Greeks and Hindus, and the mythology of the Greeks and Hindus have anything in common; but I do not know of any scholar of any authority who denies that the Greek Zeus finds its true explanation in the Vedic Dyaus, and that our first duty as students of Comparative Mythology must be to discover the etymology of as many mythological proper names as possible. To say that critics disagree among themselves, and that they need not be listened to till they agree, is one of those lazy commonplaces which no true scholar would dare to employ. I know full well that several mythological etymologies have been contested, and I have always been most grateful for any criticisms proceeding from scholars who really care for the progress of our science.

A. Barth on Comparative Mythology.

Among them few have a better right to be listened to than M. A. Barth. He has often criticised what Kuhn and others have written on the origin of mythology, but after making all necessary reservation, he sums up as follows:—

'No one contests any longer that myths are from the first the natural and popular expression of very simple facts; that particularly the most ancient have reference to the most common phenomena of nature; that they depend very closely on language, being often no more than an antiquated form of it; and

that what applies to words in general applies likewise to the immense variety of myths, namely that they can be reduced to a small number of elements, as words are to a small number of roots. In spite of the state of flux they are in, and their apparent confusion, they possess a certain cohesion and are held together by a kind of hidden logic. They do not migrate so easily nor so wildly as had been supposed, from one nation to another, from one race to another, but, like language, they are transmitted by inheritance only, and there are characteristic signs by which borrowed foreign myths can be discovered quite as well as borrowed foreign words. . . . By applying these principles students of comparative mythology have established the fact that the common ancestors of the Celts, the Italians, the Hellenes, the Germans, the Slaves, the Iranians and the Hindus, at a time when they were still settled side by side in some for ever forgotten region of the old continent, adored the same deities; and they have succeeded in restoring at least some persons of that prehistoric pantheon. Of these two series of results, which together constitute Aryan Mythology, the one, that which establishes the unity of beliefs, is certain, quite as certain as the corresponding result established by the Science of Language, namely the unity of an Indo-European mother tongue. The other series, however, the partial restoration of those beliefs, is far less certain.'

If it is considered that this judgment was delivered by a very independent judge so far back as 1880 in the *Bulletin Critique de la Mythologie Aryenne* in the *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, it can hardly be called exaggeration when in 1886 I expressed my con-

viction that the fundamental principles of Comparative Mythology were now beyond the reach of cavil or criticism.

But in order to avoid misunderstandings and barren discussions, we ought to divide Comparative Mythology also into three branches, which may be defined as, (1) the *Etymological* or *genealogical*, (2) the *Analogical*, (3) the *Psychological* or *ethno-psychological*.

The Etymological School.

The Etymological branch of Comparative Mythology places the names and stories of certain gods and heroes side by side, and tries to prove that these names were derived from prototypes common to certain families of speech. As its object is not only to compare, but to *identify* these names, and the persons to whom they belong, it is clear that this branch of Comparative Mythology can deal with the traditions of such languages only as have been proved to be connected genealogically. It is natural, therefore, that this special domain of research should have been almost exclusively cultivated by critical scholars, and that the evidence to which they appeal should be entirely etymological, and under the sway of the strictest phonetic laws.

Analogical School.

The second branch, the *Analogical*, might claim for itself the principal right to the name of Comparative Mythology, for it is chiefly occupied with comparing myths and legends, without attempting to prove that they are actually identical in origin. Like the etymological school, it confines itself to the myths of cognate languages, but after having shown how many different

names and personifications may attach themselves to the principal objects of mythological thought, such as the sun, the moon, the sky, the earth, fire, and water, storms and lightning, and in how many different ways the same story may be told of these polynomous objects, it proceeds to a comparison of myths which, though not identical, must have sprung from the same common stratum, and thus takes possession of a far larger area of mythological thought as the common property of a race than could be claimed by purely etymological tests. This analogical process has its dangers, like all purely morphological comparisons, but it forms nevertheless an almost indispensable supplement in the genealogical treatment of mythology.

Psychological School.

While both the Genealogical and the Analogical schools confine themselves to a comparison of mythologies which are handed down to us in languages held together by the ties of a common origin, the *Psychological* or *Ethno-psychological* school soars higher, and comprehends the mythologies of all mankind. There is nothing in all the mythologies of the world that cannot be compared. What Heine said to an Ethno-psychological lover,

> 'Und mein Herz, was dir gefällt,
> Alles, Alles, darfst Du lieben'—

may be said to an Ethno-psychological Mythologist:

> 'Und mein Freund, was dir gefällt,
> Alles, Alles, darfst vergleichen.'

It is a most fascinating, though, no doubt, at the same time, a somewhat dangerous study, unless it is carried on by men of scholarlike instinct and historical

tact. Its charm consists in the discovery of the most surprising coincidences in the mythologies, the customs, and traditions of distant races, distant in space as well as in time, unconnected by any relationship, whether genealogical or linguistic, civilised and uncivilised, ancient and modern. And it becomes still more attractive when it leads us on to the discovery of general motives which alone can account for such similarities. It becomes, in fact, an historical psychology of the human race (*Völkerpsychologie*), and promises in time results of the highest value, not only to the historian, but to the philosopher also.

I. The Etymological School.

The Names of Gods.

Comparative Mythology rests, as we saw, and can only rest, on Comparative Philology, and such has been the constant advance of that science, particularly with regard to the laws which regulate the interchange of consonants and vowels, that many etymological identifications which seemed quite legitimate fifty years ago, cannot be considered so any longer. My own conviction has always been that phonetic laws cannot be administered in too Draconian a spirit, and that there ought to be no difference made in applying them either to vowels or to consonants. It is far better to leave an etymology, however tempting, as not proven for a time, than to tamper with a single phonetic law.

But, with regard to mythological names, I confess that I myself have been guilty sometimes of pleading for *circonstances atténuantes*, and I must do so once more. I pointed out many years ago, first, that all

mythology was in its origin local or dialectic, and that therefore we must be prepared in mythological names for dialectic variations, which we should not tolerate in other nouns and verbs. In one of my latest papers (*Internationale Zeitschrift für allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft*, vol. i. p. 214), where I compare *Zephyros* with the Vedic *Gâhusha*, I had to remark: 'Scholars might differ as to Sanskrit *g* being represented by Greek ζ; but that on Greek soil γ and ζ vary dialectically, can be seen from γεύσασθαι and ζεύσασθαι, ἐπιζαρέω by the side of βαρύς, Sanskrit guru; πεφυζότες and πεφυγότες,' etc.

I quite appreciate the motives which have led some scholars to dispute this principle and to object to the granting of any greater latitude in the comparison of mythological names than of ordinary words. But we cannot shut our eyes to facts. Now it is a fact that many of the Greek mythological names appear under dialectic forms which it would be difficult to reduce to general phonetic laws.

Dialectic varieties.

By the side of Ἀπόλλων we find Ἄπλουν (Thessalian), and in Etruscan *Aplu*; by the side of Ποσειδῶν, Ποσείδης, Ποτίδας, Ποτειδάων; by the side of Ἄιδης, gen. Ἄιδου, Ἀΐδης, gen. Ἀΐδαο (also an old gen. Ἄϊδος); by the side of Δημήτηρ, Δᾶ, Δηώ. These are parallel or dialectic forms which cannot be derived one from the other. We cannot derive, for instance, *Poseidon* from *Potidas*, nor *Potidas* from *Poseidon*. Supposing then that the form Potidas had not been preserved to us, but that Poseidon would yield an intelligible etymology if only we could trace it back to a form like Poteidon, we should have taken a phonetic liberty which might

be without any excuse in Greek, and which nevertheless might have yielded an explanation of the myth of Poseidon in accordance with facts. If we take even so well-known a name as Ζεύς, I doubt whether its various forms, such as Ζεύς, gen. Διός, Ζάν, Ζηνός, Δίς and Δεύς, could have been traced satisfactorily to a common base without the help of Sanskrit.

Obsolete Names.

Secondly, I pointed out, likewise many years ago, that it was almost an essential condition, before a name could assume a truly mythological character, that, by some accident or other, its etymological meaning should have been somewhat obscured. Words like *Hemera*, day, *Nyx*, night, *Helios*, sun, *Selene*, moon, may send out a few mythological offshoots, but it is chiefly round dark and decaying names such as *Kastor* and *Polydeukes*, *Apollon* and *Athene* that the mythological ivy grows most luxuriantly[1].

The Dawn.

Let us now return for a moment to *Eos*. Her name in Sanskrit is Ushas, and we saw that it means the bright one, from a root VAS, to shine. The Dawn, of course, might have been called by many names, and we shall soon see that she was called by many names and that some of them have survived though under strange disguises. But that Ushas should have remained her principal name in Sanskrit, and that the identical name, Eos, should appear in Greek, shows that she was known as a definite personality before the Aryan Separation.

[1] See Benfey, *Tritonia Athana*, pp. 8–9

A comparison of Eos, as we saw her in Greece, with what the Veda tells us of Ushas, will show us that much in her character, which we are inclined to look upon as simply Greek poetry, is far more than that—is in fact the outcome of Aryan thought before it was divided into various national streams. Though I am rather anticipating, yet I think that a study of Ushas, as she actually appears in the Veda, may prove useful as giving you a clear idea of what Comparative Mythology can really do for us.

We read, Rv. I. 48, 7: 'She has harnessed (her steeds) from a far distance, from the rising of the sun; on a hundred chariots Ushas spreads herself out, going towards men.'

Rv. I. 124, 5: 'In the eastern half of the watery sky she has put forth her banner; she spreads far and wide, and fills the two laps of her parents.'

You see how mythology is beginning. She has already chariot and horses, she carries a banner of light, and she has two parents, heaven and earth, whose lap she fills with her light.

In the same verse she is also called gávâm *gánitrî*, 'the mother of the cows,' these cows being either the clouds which pour water on the fields, or the bright mornings which, like cows, are supposed to step out one by one from the stable of the night.

Thus we read again, Rv. III. 61, 4: 'Ushas, the mistress of the stable, comes, the wealthy, as if loosening her girdle.' Here she has clearly assumed the character of a woman, she has a girdle which she can put off like the clouds that surround her, and she is a rich woman, the mistress of her own stable, the stable constituting the chief wealth of the Vedic Aryas.

Thus she goes on growing before our very eyes. Sometimes she is still simply light, or like streams of light, or like rivers of clouds. Then it is said that she has no feet, and that she became the first of those who have feet (Rv. I. 152, 3), nay, that she is like a beautiful woman (Rv. I. 48, 5, yóshâ-iva sûnárî). Soon she is compared to a bride, adorned by her mother (I. 123, 10. 11); as smiling on approaching her beloved (I. 123, 10; VII. 76, 3). Sometimes she is clothed in bright garments (I. 192, 1–4); at other times, proud of her faultless limbs, she reveals her beautiful body (I. 124, 6; I. 123, 10; V. 80, 5).

One feature peculiar to the Veda is the plurality of the dawn. Whether the many dawns were meant for the manifold rays of light playing across the sky in the morning, or for the dawns that come and go every day, certain it is that by the side of the one Dawn, poets constantly speak of the many Dawns also.

Religious Germs.

So far, however, all that is said of Ushas in the Veda might be called mere mythological poetry. But there are some expressions which contain religious germs. It is often said that the dawn is the sister of the dark night, that the two, day and night, succeed each other regularly, that the dawn is in fact always the same, always returning, the old, and yet the ever-young. Then follow such sayings as that she who makes every one else to grow old, remains young herself. Soon she is called the young, the never-aging, the never-dying—and at last, the immortal.

This will show you how language, by the mere formation of a certain class of words, leads us on to myth,

and from myth to religion. Ushas, the bright, devî, has now become Ushas, the immortal, and after that step has been taken, what is more natural than that she should become an attractive centre for other religious sentiments and thoughts? Even with us a bright morning raises our spirits, and rouses a sense of happiness and gratitude in our heart, though the object of our gratitude may remain nameless. Think what it must have been in early times, when life and everything was felt to depend on the kindly light of the morning! A bright sunrise was a new life, a sunless, cold, stormy morning meant suffering, often starvation or even death. Need we wonder then that some words should have been stammered forth at the rise of a bright dawn, words of joy and gratitude, addressed not to a nameless being, but to the kind and brilliant Ushas, or Eos, or Aurora?

Moral Germs.

Moral ideas also would soon cluster round such names as the Dawn. If a crime, a dark crime, as we call it, had been committed during the night, who was to discover or to revenge it? Again the Dawn, under one of her many names, the Sanskrit Sara*n*yu, the Greek *Erinys*.

You may say, But why did not people ask who that Eos really was, before they praised her and thanked her? This is a difficult question to answer. But do we always ask what a name really means, what is behind a name, what is the true substance of a name? We speak of Angels, without asking what they are made of. The ancients did the same, and when they had called Ushas, the daughter of Dyaus or Zeus, their

mind seemed satisfied, at least for a time. Names have a wonderfully satisfying power, and few only venture to lift the veil which language has thrown over nature. And when they do, what do they find? They find the infinite hidden under a name, and they find that all they can know of the infinite is what is signified by these names. Ushas, the morning light, is as good a name for the Infinite as Dyaus, the sky, who became *Zeus* and *Jupiter*, only that its history took a different direction. And remember that we ourselves also, though we may no longer use the name of Morning-light for the Infinite, the Beyond, the Divine, still find no better expression than *Light*, when we speak of the manifestations of God whether in nature or in our mind.

Ahanâ, Athene.

So far the way of Comparative Mythology is smooth and easy. But etymology, if only kept under proper control, can lead us over more rugged roads, and give us light in darker passages.

I said before that though Ushas was the oldest name of the Dawn, having been fixed before the Aryan Separation, there were many other names given to the same phenomenon, as looked upon from different points of view. Some of these names might be used by one poet only, others might become traditional in one family or clan, and these dialectic names would lend themselves most easily to mythological phraseology, on account of the very uncertainty of their original meaning. The dawn as Ushas has become mythological, but, as we saw in the Veda as well as in Homer, its natural character was never quite forgotten.

Now there is in the Veda another name for the

Dawn, which is Ahanâ. It occurs but once, in a hymn addressed to Ushas, and there can be no doubt that it is one of the many epithets of the dawn.

I. 123, 4. *Gṛihám-gṛiham ahanấ yâti ákkha,*
Divé-dive ádhi nấma dádhânâ,
Sisâsantî dyotanấ sásvat ấ agât
Ágram-agram it bhagate vásûnâm.

'Ahanâ comes towards every house,
Giving a name to every day;
Dyotanâ returns always eager for gain.
She obtains the best of all treasures.'

When we ask why Ahanâ should mean the dawn, the answer is easy. Ahan and ahar mean the day, and ahanî in the dual means day and night. In Sanskrit mythology this name of Ahanâ has remained sterile, but in Greek, as we shall see, it has become the germ of a magnificent growth. When we ask under what form Ahanâ could appear in Greek we should say at first Ἀχαν*α* or Ἀχν*α*. Neither of these forms exists. But we must remember that Sanskrit h represents three original sounds, namely gh, dh, and bh. It represents gh, for instance, in dah, to burn, by the side of which we have Sanskrit ni-dâgha, heat. It represents dh, as, for instance, in NAH, to bind together, *neetere*, by the side of which we have *NADH, in the present naddhá. It represents bh, as in the same root NAH, by the side of which we have NABH in nâbhi, in GRAH and GRABH, both meaning to take, to grab[1].

In Greek itself we find the aspirates changing dialectically. We have not only ὄρνις, ὄρνιθος, but also ὄρνις, ὄρνιχος. We have ἴθμα and ἶχμα, and similar forms.

[1] Cf. Sk. dahra = dabhra.

We have therefore a perfect right to expect *Athanâ* or *Aphanâ* instead of *Achanâ*[1]. Now *'Aθάνα* exists in Greek as an old name of *Athene*. We have also *'Aθâναι*, and *'Aθᾶναία*. In *Athene* we have the same suffix as in *Selene*, and the change between the two suffixes *ăna* and *âna* has been shown to be very common[2]. Phonetically therefore the identification of Ahanâ in the Veda and *Athene* in Greek is beyond the reach of criticism and cavil. If after that we identify Ahanâ with *Athene* mythologically also, we must see clearly what we mean. First of all, we cannot mean that there ever was a real being, a woman or a goddess, who was known in India and in Greece and had received there the same name, Ahanâ and *Athanâ*.

Secondly, we cannot mean that whatever was told of *Athene* in Greek was told of Ahanâ also in Sanskrit.

Thirdly, and least of all, can we mean that the worship of Ahanâ was carried from India to Greece, or the worship of Athene from Greece to India.

All we can mean is that Ahanâ, as a name of the dawn, was known before Greek and Sanskrit separated, and that while in India this mythological germ withered away, it developed into a splendid growth in Greece.

We see the same with common words. Bhag, for instance, in Sanskrit, means to divide, and one of the Vedic gods, Bhaga, meant originally the divider and benefactor. In Zend also *Baga* appears in the same character, and in the Slavonic languages the Old Slav. *bogŭ* has become the general name for god. In Greek the same root *φαγ* has completely lost its

[1] *The Science of Language*, ii. 621.
[2] Kuhn, *Herabkunft des Feuers*, p. 23.

meaning of dividing, and has entered into a new channel. It means to eat, whether in the sense of dividing the meat with our teeth (φαγόντες, teeth, Hesych.) or in the sense of sharing a meal with others (as in δαίς, δαίνυμι, δαιτρός, etc.).

All this must be fully admitted, but nevertheless, as little as we could explain why φαγ in Greek means to eat, without a reference to the Sanskrit bhag, to divide, could we understand why the great Greek goddess should be called Athene, unless we knew the Sanskrit Ahanâ, and its meaning of dawn.

It is often urged by Greek scholars that the Greeks themselves had no idea that *Athene* meant originally the dawn, or the verb φαγεῖν, to divide. That, no doubt, is true, and it is quite as true that few only of the Greeks knew that *Zeus* meant originally the sky, and *Zephyros* the wind blowing from the setting of the sun, or *Boreas* the wind blowing from the northern mountains. We do not know that *Lord* meant originally *bread-giver*, or Duke a man of leading and light; but it is only after knowing it that we can understand the historical growth of the later meanings of *Lord* and *Duke*.

Nor is it impossible to discover certain traces in the mythological stories told of Athene which point to her original character as dawn-goddess. Her birth from the head of Zeus is like the rising of the dawn in the Veda from the head of Dyaus (mûrdhâ Divâḥ); and it may be in the same sense that she was called *Koryphasia*, as coming ἐκ κορυφῆς[1], and that her counterpart in Italy was called *Cap(i)ta*. Her purity points to the purity of the dawn, her wis-

[1] Bergk, *Neue Jahrbücher für Philologie*, 1860, p. 295.

dom to the brightness of the light of the morning, her valour to the irresistible light of her rays. Everything else in her character may be called Greek, and cannot be explained by any reference to Vedic ideas. But what is most interesting to the student of mythology, the germinal idea of the goddess, can be found nowhere else but in the name of Ahanâ, which would have been forgotten in India also, if it had not been for the single verse of the Rig-veda which I quoted to you.

Daphne.

So far, I believe, we are on safe ground. But I think we may venture a step beyond. We saw that the name for morning or day in Sanskrit was ahan or ahar, meaning originally brightness. Now the Teutonic words for day are derived from a root *dah*, to burn, to be hot. The Gothic *dag-s*, A.S. *dæg*, English *day*, presuppose a root DHAGH, and this exists in Sanskrit as dah, to burn.

Whether the two roots, AH, from which ahan, day, and DAH, from which Goth. *dag-s*[1], day, are parallel roots, is a question that can only be decided by a full discussion of general principles. To say that an initial *d* in dah is lost, is saying nothing, for initial *d*'s are never lost without a reason. The same applies to the opposite theory that an initial *d* was added to the root AH. All we can say is that there are other cases where we find parallel roots, one with, the other without, an initial d. Whether this is mere accident, we cannot tell at present; all we can say is that there are analogies for that process. For instance, we find in Sanskrit asru, tear, probably derived from

[1] Pott, *Etym. Forschungen*, iii. p. 825 seq.

a root as, to be sharp and cutting; and we find in Greek δάκρυ, tear, being evidently derived from a root DAS, to bite[1]. Are we to believe that these two words have nothing in common, and that they do not owe their origin to a common metaphorical concept, namely of sharp and biting, and therefore to a common creative act? Both roots, AS and DAS, exist and have proved prolific in different Aryan languages. From AS, to be sharp (in every sense of the word), we have in Sanskrit asra and asri, point, edge, in Latin *acus*, *âcer*, in Greek ἄκρος and ἄκρις. As *acidus*, from meaning sharp, comes to mean bitter and sour, asru in Sanskrit and Zend, *aszara* in Lituanian, came to mean a bitter tear.

From DAS, to bite (*bitter* comes from to bite, Sk. bhid, Lat. *findo*), we have in Greek δάκρυ, in Lat. *lacruma*, in Gothic *tagr*, in English *tear*, and who can doubt that all these words mean originally the biting tear? Of course, we *can* doubt anything, and as it always looks much more learned to doubt than to accept, the temptation to shake one's head is very great. But for that very reason this cheap scepticism deserves a sharp rebuke, such as Professor Pott, for instance, has lately administered to a learned colleague. 'Naturally,' he writes, 'the determined tone of the professor's veto, when he says "the comparison of asru with dasru is as little justified as that of ahan with day," signifies nothing[2].'

But even those scholars who maintain that the root

[1] Fick goes much further, and derives, for instance, agni, fire, from the root DAH; Holtzmann points out that the goddess Danâyu in the Mahâbhârata appears as Anâyu in the Harivamsa; see Holtzmann, *Agni*, p. 34.

[2] Pott, *Etymologische Forschungen*, vol. ii. 4, p. 510.

AH is in no way connected with the root DAH, cannot deny that Dahanâ would be a perfectly legitimate derivation of the root DAH, which root has given us the names for day in the Teutonic languages. That root DAH presupposes a root DHAGH, and belongs to a whole class of roots in which, according to Grassmann's observation, an initial and final aspirate are necessarily represented in Gothic by initial and final media.

As the final h in the root DAH may represent an original gh or bh, we get two possible varieties, DAGH and DABH. DAGH exists in Sanskrit nidâgha, heat; DABH would in Greek appear as δαφ. From this δαφ the Greek by a most regular process could have derived δαφ-νη [1], and the meaning of that name would have been the same as that of Ahanâ in Sanskrit, namely the burning one, the bright, the brilliant. By the side of Δάφνη we have the Thessalian form Δαύχνη, with the guttural final of DAH, and Hesychios mentions δαυχμόν as a name of the wood of the laurel-tree, because it burns easily (εὔκαυστον).

If then we know that *Phoebos* meant the sun, and few scholars will deny that, and that *Daphne* may have meant the dawn, we shall probably not look very far for an explanation of the Greek saying, that the Dawn fled before the Sun, and vanished when he wished to embrace her.

But why, it may be asked, was *Daphne* supposed to have been changed into a laurel-tree? Ethnopsychological mythologists will tell us that in Samoa, Sarawak, and other savage countries, men and women

[1] M. M., *Comparative Mythology*, 1856; *Selected Essays*, i. p. 398.

are supposed to be capable of turning into plants, and that, as the Greeks were savages once, they no doubt believed the same, and we need therefore inquire no further. Now, with all possible respect for Ethno-psychologists, or as they are sometimes called, Folk-lorists, I cannot think that this would be much more than explaining *ignotum per ignotius*. The question that everybody would ask is, Why then did the Samoans and Sarawakians and other savages believe that men and women turned into trees? Neither Totemism, surely, nor Fetishism, nor Tabuism, would help them to that belief. Then why should not the classical scholar be allowed to look for a key nearer home, and when he finds that the laurel, being a wood that burns easily, was therefore called δάφνη[1], or fire-wood, why should he not be allowed to say that the legend of *Daphne*, the dawn, being changed into *daphne*, the laurel-tree, may have been due to the influence of language on thought, to some self-forgetfulness of language—in fact, to the same influence which induced people to adopt an ox passing a ford as the arms of Oxford?

'Warum in die Ferne schweifen?
Sieh, das Gute liegt so nah!'

Whether cases of identity of name, like that of *Daphne* and *daphne*, are likewise at the bottom of the Samoan and Sarawakian belief that men and women can be turned into plants, is a far more difficult question to answer, and before we generalise on such matters, it is far better to inquire into a number of single cases, such as those, for instance, of Hya-

[1] Cf. *The Science of Language*, ii. 621; *Selected Essays*, i. 399; δαχμὸν εὔκαυστον ξύλον δάφνης, Hesych. l. c.

cinthus, Narcissus, and others in Greece and elsewhere. We shall find, I believe, here as elsewhere, that the same effect is not always due to the same cause, but unless we find some kind of cause, Comparative Mythology might indeed be called a collection of rubbish, and not a museum of antiquities. To say that 'a legend of a woman being changed into a tree is explained when we have shown that it is natural to a race which believes in woman being changed into trees,' is surely not saying very much.

Professor Gruppe has a curious way of dealing with these mythological etymologies. He asks whether they can be true, and then leaves the matter alone. 'Are we allowed,' he writes (p. 90), 'to declare Daphne, the laurel, the beloved of *Δαφνηφόρος*, to be the dawn, because this name, by no means clear as yet, corresponds perhaps to Sk. dahanâ, which is said to be identical with ahanâ, an adjective of the dawn? This is a combination which ignores the atoning and purifying power ascribed to the laurel not by the Greeks only.' What can be gained by such remarks? Daphne, the dawn, was called Daphne on account of her blazing light, and not because she was originally a laurel-tree. The laurel-tree was called *δάφνη*, because, if used as fire-wood, it blazes up quickly. These were two quite distinct acts of naming, and their synonymy produced, as often, a later legend. We might as well reject the identification of Dyaus and Zeus, because it ignores the moral character of *Ζεὺς ξένιος*!

Benfey's Theory of Athene.

But although nothing really important could be brought forward against my equation Ahanâ=

Athene, the fact that another scholar had propounded another etymology seemed to offer a great opportunity to those who imagine that by simply declaring themselves incompetent to decide between two opinions, they can prove both to be wrong. Now Benfey's etymology[1] of *Athene* is certainly extremely learned, ingenious, and carefully worked out; yet whoever will take the trouble to examine its phonetic foundation, will be bound in common honesty to confess that it is untenable. We are dealing here with facts that admit of almost mathematical precision, though, as in mathematics, a certain knowledge of addition and subtraction is certainly indispensable for taking part in the discussion. I speak of the phonetic difficulties only, for if they should prove unsurmountable we need not inquire any further.

Benfey (p. 21) places his equation before us, as follows:—

Sanskrit.		*Zend.*		*Greek.*
Trita Âptyaḥ	=	Thrito and Âthwyo	=	Ἀτθίς.
Traitanaḥ	=	Thraêtanô âthwyanô		
		Thrâetânô athwyânô	=	Τριτωνὶς Ἀθάνα.
		Thraêtaonô âthwyânô.		

Leaving aside the etymology of *Trîtonia*, which may be right, quite independently of that of Athene, we have to consider whether Ἀθάνα or Ἀθήνη or Ἀθηναίη can be the same word as the Zend *âthwyânô*. And here, though willing to make every allowance for local and dialectic irregularities, I must say decidedly, No.

Âthwyânô is a peculiarly Zend modification which presupposes a Sanskrit âptyânâ. This is therefore the

[1] *Tritonia Athana, Femininum des Zendischen Thrâetâna âthwyâna.* Göttingen, 1868.

only word we can deal with, when looking for an etymology of the Greek word Athana. It is true that even this âptyânâ does not exist in Sanskrit, but we find there âp-tya, i. e. *aquaticus*, an epithet of *Trita*, of *Indra*, and, later on, of a whole class of legendary beings. From this âp-tya, however, no road leads to *Athana*, and even Benfey himself is obliged to confess at almost every step, that the phonetic changes which he postulates are without any analogy whatsoever.

He first maintains that *Athene* is connected with *Atthis*. But though *Atthis*, or *Attica*, is under the patronage of *Athene*, the two names are quite distinct. This becomes still clearer, when he traces *Atthis* back to *Attike*, for how can tt ever stand for th? I admit that there is no proof of *Attike* being derived from ἀκτή, shore, which would have rendered a transition to *Atthis* and Athene quite hopeless. But even after rejecting the derivation from ἀκτή, how shall we get from âptya to Attike? Benfey says the pt in âptya may become tt, as in πέπτειν = πέττειν. But in πέπτειν (pak) the original final consonant of the root is a guttural, not a labial. Benfey himself feels this, and he therefore appeals to the base at for ap, which appears in Sanskrit ad-bhis instead of abbhis; and postulating a further case apt, he changes ap-tya into apt-tya. He then argues that in pty, p and t are assimilated to tt, that the last t is aspirated through the influence of y, so that τθ is = pty. But here again his conscience smites him, for he admits that ty in Sanskrit never becomes θ in Greek. If so, it follows that pty cannot become τθ. Again, when he postulates the loss of τ, in order to arrive from *Atthis* at

Athene, he honestly confesses that no analogy can be found for this, and yet he adds: 'the connection of *Atthis* and *Athene* is so completely beyond the reach of doubt that it is not injured in the least by this defect.'

Lastly, when he perceives that the first vowel in *Athene* is short, while it is long in âptya, he tries to explain this by the accent, which is again impossible; or he simply postulates a form ăptya, by the side of âptya, which, however, has no existence.

I doubt whether after this, a single Sanskrit scholar would put his name to the equation âptyânâ = *Athana*, and there is no necessity therefore to examine the further speculations, which are based on it. If *Athana*, according to Benfey, is the lightning, and not the dawn, or if she is, according to others, both the lightning and the dawn, this would have to be established by other evidence; it cannot be established by her name. The equation Ahanâ = *Athene*, on the contrary, is phonetically irreproachable, and mythologically perfectly intelligible[1]. I do not wish to deny the principle to which Benfey appeals so frequently in his essay on Athana, namely that dialectic irregularities must by necessity abound in mythological names. There are limits, no doubt, to our respect for phonetic laws, but this applies chiefly to cases where the full bearing of a law has not yet been settled, not where we know the law and knowingly break it. If, for instance, we are told that there is no phonetic law

[1] M. Darmesteter (*Ormazd*, p. 34), an excellent Zend scholar, evidently not convinced by Benfey's Zend etymology of Athana, suggests that the name of *Athene* may be connected with the Zend atar, fire, lightning, the Vedic *athar; but he has not shown how atar could be represented in Greek by ἀθήνη.

sanctioning the change of nis or nakta into νύξ, νυκτός, of ἑπτά and ὀκτώ into ἕβδομος and ὄγδοος, all I can say is, that though an adequate cause of the change of *a* into *i* and *v*, of *π* into *β*, and of *κ* into *γ*, is not yet known, it will be known in time. I am old and bold enough to declare that, in spite of all that has been written on the subject, I still believe in the relationship of θεός and *deus*, because, though I cannot fully account for it phonetically, it seems to me far more unaccountable that the Aryan word for God should have been lost in Greek, and been replaced afterwards by another, nearly identical in form and meaning, but totally distinct in origin [1]. And even if we yielded on the point of θεός, and admitted that it could *not* be connected with Sanskrit deva, bright, and Latin *deus*, god, how could we separate the brilliant and heavenly goddess *Theia* from the root div or dyu, to shine, she who is the wife of *Hyperion*, the mother of *Helios* (*Thiae clara progenies*, Cat. 66, 44), of *Selene*, and *Eos*, and the daughter of *Uranos* and *Ge*? What can be the meaning of θεῖος, θέειος, Lakon. σεῖος, when applied to men like Odysseus, if not θεοείκελος, god-like, or θεοειδής, of godly kind, or θεογενής, born of god? If then the same Odysseus is called Διογενής, sprung from Zeus, or δῖος, divine, excellent, if we find in Homer θεῖον γένος and δῖον γένος, side by side, are we to suppose that Διο and θεο have no connection whatever with each other [2]? By all means let

[1] See *Selected Essays*, vol. i. p. 215; Pott, in Kuhn's *Zeitschrift*, xxvi. p. 200 (1883).

[2] On the word θεός, as derived from θέειν, to run, see Cratyl. 397 D; from θεᾶσθαι, to see, Macrob. *Sat.* i. 23; from αἴθειν, Gregor. Nazianz. or. 30, c. 18; Migne, *P. Gr.* t. 36, vol. 128; *Z. D. M. G.* xxxvii. pp. 126, 451; xxxviii. p. 486.

us put a mark against all these names, for they still require justification; but let us not suppose that to be dogmatic negatively is less objectionable than to be dogmatic positively.

If it could be proved that Greek and Sanskrit had no mythological names in common, there would, of course, be an end of Comparative Mythology in the narrow sense of the word. We might still be able to compare, but we could no longer think of identifying gods and heroes, having no common name, and therefore no common origin. We can, if we like, compare Jupiter, Jehovah, and Unkulunkulu, but we cannot identify them. We should find many things which these three supreme deities share in common, only not their names, that is, not their original conception. We should have in fact *morphological* comparisons, which are very interesting in their way, but not what we want for historical purposes, namely *genealogical* identifications.

LECTURE XVII.

THE GENEALOGICAL SCHOOL.

Identification and Comparison.

IT is curious that it should be necessary to repeat again and again what seems almost self-evident, namely that it is one thing to *compare*, but quite a different thing to *identify*. No two deities can be identified, unless we can trace them back to the same name, and unless we can prove that name to have been the work of one and the same original name-giver. This is a point that must be clearly apprehended, if further discussions on mythology are to lead to any useful results.

But when the preparatory work of the etymologist has been finished, when we can show, for instance, that the Sanskrit name for dawn, Ushas, is the same as the Greek *Eos*; that the Sanskrit name for night, Nis, is but a dialectic variety of the same base which we have in Νύξ and *Nox* (*noc-tis*); that Dyaus is *Zeus*, and Agni, fire, is *ignis*, what then? We then have, first of all, irrefragable evidence that these names existed before the Aryan Separation; secondly, we know that, whatever character may have been assigned to the bearers of these mythological names in later times, their original conception must have been that which their etymology discloses; thirdly, that

whatever, in the shape of story and legend, is told of them in common in the mythologies of different countries, must have existed before the final break up of the Aryan family. This is what constitutes Comparative Mythology in the strict, or if you like, in the narrow sense of the word. This stronghold must never be surrendered, and in order to keep it impregnable it must be kept distinct both from the *Analogical* and from the *Psychological* divisions of Comparative Mythology.

Sarad and Ceres.

To take another instance. If I have succeeded in proving the identity of *Ceres* and Sk. *sarad*, autumn or the ripening season, a solid foundation is laid. That foundation must be examined by scholars, and no one who is not an expert, has anything to say here. He must simply accept what is given him, and, if he cannot himself decide between two opposite opinions, he must at all events not try to pose as a linguistic Hercules *in bivio*. Neither common sense, nor even forensic eloquence, will here be of any avail.

Now it is well known that the Romans had their own etymology of *Ceres*. Servius, *V. G.*, i. 7, says[1], *alma Ceres a creando dicta, quamvis Sabini Cererem panem appellant*. If this were true, *Ceres* would originally have been conceived as *creatrix*. We know that the ancient Romans did not pretend to be more than folk-etymologists, but even they would have hardly found a bridge from *creare* to *Ceres*. Modern etymologists[2], however, have taken the hint, and have proposed to derive *Ceres* from the Sk. root *kar*,

[1] Preller, *Römische Mythologie*, p. 403.
[2] Preller, l.c., p. 70.

to make, from which they also derive *Cerus* or *Kerus*, a creative genius, invoked in the *Carmen Saliare* as *Cerus Manus*, applied to *Janus*, and supposed to mean *creator bonus*. Preller goes so far as to connect with these names the word *cerfus* (the Vedic sardha) of the Umbrian Inscriptions, which is utterly impossible.

Leaving *Cerus* for further consideration, we cannot deny that phonetically *Ceres* might be derived from the root *kar*, as well as from the root sar, to ripen. This is a dilemma which we have often to face, and where we must have recourse to what may be called the history and the geographical distribution of roots. No purely phonetic test can tell us, for instance, whether *Vesta*, Greek Ἑστία, is derived from *vas*, to dwell, or from *vas*, to shine, to say nothing of other roots. Curtius derives it from *vas* (ush) to shine forth, from which *vasu*, the bright gods, bright wealth, etc.; because the goddess was first the fire, and afterwards the hearth and the home. Roth derives it from *vas*, to dwell[1]. I prefer *vas*, to shine forth, because the root *vas*, to dwell, has left no other traces in Latin.

I feel the same objection to *kar*, to make, as the etymon of *Ceres*, which I feel to *vas*, to dwell, as the etymon of *Vesta*. The root *kar* (or skar), first of all, does not mean to create, even in Sanskrit; but to fashion, to perform; secondly, there is hardly one certain derivation of *kar* in Latin, for both *Cerus* and *creo*, *cresco*, etc., are doubtful. Grassmann, who rejected the derivation from *kar*, proposed to derive Ceres from karsh, to draw a furrow. But karsh never occurs in the North-Aryan languages in the sense of ploughing, nor is *Ceres* the deity of ploughing

[1] Kuhn's *Zeitschrift*, xix. pp. 218, 222.

or sowing, but of reaping. I therefore prefer the root sar, which means to heat, to cook, to ripen; from it *srita*, roasted, and sarad, harvest, autumn. A secondary form of the same root is srâ, caus. srapay. From this root, not from *carpere*, to pluck, we have in Greek καρπός, the ripe fruit, in Anglo-Saxon *hærfest*, autumn, the time of ripening. The Latin *corpus*, like Sk. sarîra, may possibly come from the same root, and have meant originally the ripe fruit of the body (*leibesfrucht*).

Now, considering that even the German *Herbst*, the English *harvest*, may be derived from this root, in a causative form, what doubt can there remain that *Ceres* is sarad[1], and was an old name of harvest? What was the substratum of Sarad and Ceres, whether the time of harvest, or the earth at the time of harvest, the harvest-sun or the harvest-moon, which seemed every year to cause the ripening temperature, these are questions impossible to answer. When the concept of deity had once come in, definite thought became unnecessary, and the poet claimed perfect freedom to conceive his *Ceres* as suited his own imagination. How early the harvest, the furrow (Sîtâ), the field (Urvarâ). the days, the seasons, and the year were raised to the rank of goddesses, may be seen from the invocations addressed to them in the Domestic Sacrifices[2] of the Brâhmans. Almost all

[1] On the final d and s, see my article on *Ceres*, in Kuhn's *Zeitschrift*, xviii. 211. For some of Gruppe's bickerings, see *Griechische Culte*, p. 105, note 1.

[2] Pâraskara Grihya S. II. 17, 9. Sîtâ, the furrow, in later times the wife of Râma, is here invoked as the wife of Indra. Urvarâ is ἄρουρα; from Sîtâ and sîtya, frumentum, σῖτος has been derived, though the initial s requires justification. On the days, as thirty sisters, see Pâraskara G. S. III. 3, 5 a; on the seasons and the year,

that we are told of *Ceres*, as an aboriginal Italian deity, can be fully explained by this her etymological character, and with this the task of the Comparative Mythologist is finished. Her absorption by the Greek *Demeter*, and all that flows from it, belongs to the domain of the classical scholar and need not detain us at present.

Mythological Etymologies.

It seems to me that after the etymology of a mythological name has once been satisfactorily settled, we have not only the real starting-point in the history of a deity or a hero, but also a clear indication of the direction which that history followed from the first. I look in fact on these etymologies and on the equations between the names of deities in different cognate languages as the true capital of Comparative Mythology, and on every new discovery, if well established, as a permanent addition to our wealth. If we want to know the real founders and benefactors of Comparative Mythology, we must look for them among those who discovered such equations as Dyaus = Zeus, and defended them against every objection that could reasonably be raised against them.

Changes in the Character of Gods.

Still, it often happens that, after we have established the true meaning of a mythological name, it seems in no way to yield a solution of the character of the god who bears it. No one can doubt the phonetic identity of the names Haritas in Sanskrit and Χάριτες in Greek, but the former are the horses of the rising sun, the latter show no trace whatever of an equine cha-

III. 2, 2. Sarad is invoked in the same place as abhayâ, free from danger.

racter. Kuhn supposed that *Prometheus* took its origin from the Vedic pramantha; yet pramantha is only the stick used for rubbing wood to produce a fire, *Prometheus* is the wisest of the sons of the Titans. Sârameya in Sanskrit is a dog, Hermeias a god. *Kerberos* in Greek is a dog, Sarvarî in Sanskrit the night. The Maruts in the Veda are clearly the gods of the thunderstorm, but there are passages where they are addressed as powerful gods, as givers of all good things, without a trace of thunder and lightning about them. We see, in fact, very clearly how here as elsewhere[1] the idea of gods of the thunderstorm became gradually generalised, and how in the end the Maruts, having once been recognised as divine beings, were implored without any reference to their meteorological origin.

Strange as this may seem, it could hardly be otherwise in the ancient world. If one poet became the priest of a family, if one family became supreme in a tribe, if one tribe became by conquest the ruler of a nation, the god praised by one individual poet could hardly escape becoming the supreme god of a nation,

[1] Mr. Bancroft (*Native Races of the Pacific States of North America*, 1875, vol. iii. p. 117) remarks that in many of the American languages the same word is used for storm and god. Mr. Brinton writes (*Myths of the N. W.*, p. 50), 'the descent is almost imperceptible which leads to the personification of the wind as God.' How easily the wind becomes a hero, sometimes the ancestor of the human race, has been shown by Reville, *Religions des Peuples Non-civilisés*, vol. i. p. 218. Goldziher (*Mythology among the Hebrews*, p. 224) quotes from Nachtigall that the Baghirmi in Central Africa use the same name for Storm and Deity. The Akra people on the Gold Coast of Africa say, 'Will God come?' meaning, 'Will it rain?' In the *Jahrbücher für Deutsche Theologie*, 1875, Schrader, in an essay on *The original signification of the Divine name Jahve-Zebaoth*, p. 317, drew attention to the Assyrian name for wind, *a-iv* (ha-iv), *a-u* (ha-u), root הוה, to breathe, to blow; so that God, the breather, would have to be placed parallel with the storm-god Ramnân.

and having become supreme, would receive in time all the insignia of a supreme deity[1]. In the Veda the old supreme deity of the bright sky, Dyaus, who remained to the end the supreme god among Greeks and Romans, is visibly receding, and his place is being taken by a god, unknown to the other Aryan nations, and hence probably of later origin, Indra. Indra was originally a god of the thunderstorm, the giver of rain (indra, like indu, rain-drops), the ally of the Rudras and Maruts, but he was soon invested with all the insignia of a supreme ruler, residing in heaven, and manifested no longer in the thunderstorm only, but in the light of heaven and the splendour of the sun.

Accidental Similarities of Names.

Any one acquainted with the principles of Comparative Philology knows of course that perfect identity between mythological names in Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin is not to be expected, but would, on the contrary, be extremely suspicious. The phonetic peculiarities of each member of a family of languages extend so far that it can hardly ever happen that all the letters of a word should be exempt from their influences. That *care* in English, and Latin *cura*, that *whole* in English, and Greek ὅλος, should have no connection whatever with each other, has often been denounced as one of the absurdities of the

[1] Among the Scandinavians, the Swedes and Norwegians seem to have been less devoted to Odinn than the Gotlanders and Danes. The Old Norse sagas several times mention images of Thor, never one of Odinn; only Saxo Grammaticus does so in an altogether mythical way. Adam of Bremen, though he names Wodan among the Upsala gods, assigns but the second place to him, and the first to Thor. Later still, the worship of Freyr seems to have predominated in Sweden. See Grimm's *Teutonic Mythology*, vol. i. pp. 160–164; Lippert, *Die Religionen der Europäischen Culturvölker*, p. 220 seq.

Science of Languages. It may sound equally absurd to deny a common origin to the Greek *Heracles* and the old Latin *Herculus*, if ever there was such a god; yet it is quite certain that, if there was, as Mommsen supposes, an indigenous *Herculus*, a protecting deity of the enclosed cattle-yard (from *hercere*), he could never have had any real relationship with *Heracles*. The slightest acquaintance with the phonetic laws of the Aryan languages would in our days keep a scholar from proposing comparisons which would formerly have passed without difficulty, such as, for instance, *Thor* and the Greek *θοῦρος*, rushing, furious; the Saxon *Hera*[1], the Latin *hera*, mistress, and the Greek *Hera*; or Celtic *Bel* or *Beal*[2], and the Semitic *Bel* or *Baal*.

Foreign Gods.

In the last-mentioned case, however, where we find the same or very similar mythological names among people speaking languages entirely unrelated to each other, a new question arises, namely whether they might have been carried by migration from one country to another. This is a subject which has of late attracted much attention, and deserves to be treated by Comparative Mythologists in the same spirit in which the study of foreign words begins to be treated by Comparative Philologists. As we are able to say with perfect certainty, at least in the majority of cases, whether a Latin word has the same origin as a Greek word, or whether it is borrowed from Greek, whether German shares the same word in common with Latin, or has taken it over

[1] Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, p. 232.
[2] Grimm, l.c., p. 208.

ready made, whether the Celtic languages have enriched themselves from Greek, Latin, and German, or have derived certain words from the common Aryan treasury, we must, by observing the same phonetic laws, endeavour to discover whether a Greek deity is indigenous or borrowed from Semitic sources, whether a Roman deity is of Italian growth or of Greek extraction, and whether certain Celtic deities were common Aryan property, or adopted from neighbouring nations.

That Egyptian, Phenician, Babylonian and Assyrian influences have told on the mythology of the Hellenic races, no one has been more ready to admit than the Greeks themselves. In several cases—as, for instance, in the theories propounded by Herodotus as to the Egyptian origin of Greek deities—this Greek indebtedness has been much exaggerated, and the recent researches of Egyptologists have enabled us to reduce that debt to its proper limits. In other cases, however, the modern discoveries in Asia Minor, Phenicia, Babylonia and Assyria have revived the old tendency of explaining everything Greek from Oriental sources. That Greece is indebted to the East, its letters, its coins, its measures, its early art proclaim with no uncertain voice. But that Greece was not a mere pauper, living on Eastern charity, a single Aristeia of Homer will be sufficient to prove. That Heracles, Hera, Aphrodite, that Zeus himself has become a centre of attraction for floating elements of Oriental mythology, every one who has eyes to see can see. But that these gods and heroes were simply borrowed from non-Hellenic sources has never been proved. What has happened in so many cases when

ancient nations, each having its own religion and mythology, were brought into closer contact, has happened between the Greeks and their Oriental neighbours. Gods who showed a certain similarity were identified, and identified *bonâ fide*, nay, in some cases, even their names were adopted by one language from the other. That Thebes, for instance, the capital of Kadmos, introduced into Greece many Phenician elements, is well known; but Thebes was not the only place where Phenician emigrants settled. We know, for instance, that Phenicians had early settlements at Korinth, and we can easily understand therefore how the worship of *Astarte* found a new home on the Isthmos, and how even a purely Semitic deity, *Melikertes* (*Melkarth*), gained admission into the local mythology of that part of Greece.

This subject, however, deserves a special treatment; nor is it the duty of Comparative Mythology to do more than enter its *caveat* against impossible identification [1].

If, however, we find the same names in Germany and Central America, in Egypt and the Polynesian Islands, we cannot appeal to early migrations, but have simply to admit that the chapter of accidents is larger than we expected.

In Central America, for instance, we meet with a serpent deity of the name of *Votan*. The similarity of the name had early attracted the notice of scholars [2], but it was reserved to Liebrecht to point out a simi-

[1] This point has been well argued by Dr. L. von Schroeder in his *Griechische Götter und Heroen*, Berlin, 1887.

[2] J. G. Müller, *Geschichte der Amerikan. Urreligionen*, p. 486 seq. The subject is fully treated in Réville's *Les Religions des Peuples non-civilisés*, 1883, i. p. 216.

larity even in the exploits ascribed to this American *Votan* and to the Old Norse *Oðinn*. When *Votan* had returned from the town of the temple of god to his home *Valum-Votan* (name of ruins not far from Ciudad Real de Chiapas in Guatemala), he related that he had to pass through a subterraneous passage which passed through the earth and ended near the *root of heaven*. This passage, we are told, was made by serpents, and he, being the son of a serpent, was able to pass through it. After that, *Votan* made a similar passage near the gorge of Zaqui, extending as far as *Tzequil*, both localities, we are told, near Ciudad Real. Bishop Nuñez de la Vega further relates that *Votan* went to Huehuctan, bringing with him several tapirs, and built by his breath a dark house in which he deposited a treasure, confided to the care of a woman and some guardians. There are some curious ruins left of *Huehuctan* in the district of *Soconusco*, and the Bishop relates that the treasure, consisting of some large urns, deposited together with idols in a subterranean chamber, were handed over to him by the woman and the guardians, and burnt on the market-place of Huehuctan [1].

Liebrecht points out that the Teutonic *Oðinn* also, as *Bölverkr*, is said to have crept as a serpent through a hole, and in memory of it, to have established a similar passage in some mountain gorge. He compares the urn with the vessels *Ódrœrir*, *Bodn*, and *Són* in the *Hnit-mountain*, and the woman with *Gunlöð*, the guardian.

In spite of these coincidences, which Liebrecht

[1] Brasseur de Bourgbourg, *Popol Vah*; M. M., *Chips from a German Workshop*, 1868, vol. i. pp. 314–42.

brings out far more fully than I could do in this place, all that we can say is that the similarity of names is purely accidental, and that therefore it is utterly useless to try to identify the two myths, unless we can first determine their original intention.

Again, that the name of the Sun-god in Mangaia is *Ra*, has been pointed out as a strange coincidence with the Egyptian God *Ra*[1]. Here again the similarity of sound is purely accidental, though the story of *Ra*, the sun, being made captive may have the same origin psychologically as the stories of the servitude of other solar heroes in Greece, Germany, Peru, and elsewhere[2].

The similarity in the name of the Storm-gods among the Polynesians, viz. *Maru* with the Vedic *Marut*, can likewise be looked upon as fortuitous only. But the similarity between the character of the Vedic *Marut*, the strikers, shouters, and warriors, and the Polynesian gods of storms, of war and destruction, may well be accounted for by that common human nature which is affected in the same way by the same phenomena of outward nature.

The same applies to the Winds[3], as worshipped by the Babylonians. They were considered as spirits both of good and of evil. They had been created in the lower part of the heaven, and they came forth from the sky, as the messengers of Anu, their king, or as the helpers of Merodach in his fight against the dragon[4]. Sometimes we hear of one terrible wind who had once been sent by Bel to drown guilty man-

[1] *Myths and Songs from the South Pacific*, by W. W. Gill, 1876; Preface, p. xiv.
[2] *Chips from a German Workshop*, vol. ii. p. 116.
[3] Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 199 seq. [4] L. c., p. 206.

kind in the waters of the deluge, and the fact that each year the memory of that terrible event rose again in the month of Sebat or January, with its 'curse of rain,' shows that in Babylon as elsewhere the great Deluge was but the reflection of the annual deluge which often overwhelmed and destroyed what to the people living then and there was in reality the whole earth. Up to this point all coincidences between the Storm-gods in Babylonia and the Storm-gods in India are perfectly intelligible. Nature was the same, and human nature was the same also.

But when we are told that the Storm-wind that brought the Deluge was called *Mâtu*, or originally *Mar-tu*, and that this word presupposes a root MÂ, MAL, and MAR, we must look upon this coincidence with the Sanskrit *Mar-ut* as belonging to the large chapter of accidents.

It is impossible to read the Polynesian story of *Ina* and her mortal lover, who, as he grew old and infirm, had to be sent back to the earth to end his days there, without thinking of *Selene* and *Endymion*, of *Eos* and *Tithonos*, though few would venture to connect her name with that of *Ino Leucothea*.

Any attempt to compare words in languages which have not been proved to be related is futile, particularly when we know nothing of the antecedents of the words to be compared. It is strange, no doubt, that the interior of the world, the invisible or nether world, the Hades, in fact, of the Mangaians, should be called *Avaiki*, Avîkî being the name of one of the lower regions, both among Brahmans and Buddhists. In Sanskrit, however, we know at least the history of the name, for we can hardly be mistaken in explaining

avîkî as a parallel form of avâkî, the lower region, also the South. With regard to the Mangaian *Avaiki*, we know very little of its etymology, yet we have only to remember that in Tahitian the name for Hades is *Hawai'i*, in New Zealand *Hawaiki*, which points to a more original *Sawaiki*, in order to convince ourselves that even the outward similarity between the Sanskrit and the Polynesian names for hell did not exist from the beginning, but is really the result of phonetic corruption.

Mythological Names which admit of no Etymology.

It is possible, of course, to study the history of mythological gods and heroes, even without knowing the etymology of their names. There are many ordinary words of which we shall never know the etymology, because they belong to a stratum of language of which little or nothing is left. They generally belong to the most ancient formations, and lie about like boulders among formations of a different age. And these are the very words that would provoke folk-etymology and folk-mythology, just as large boulders scattered on a meadow provoke village legends. In dealing with such words we become painfully aware how difficult it is, without etymological guidance, to settle on the starting-point and the first direction of a myth. We grope about, but we cannot put down our foot determinately, while as soon as we know the etymology, we feel that we have found the true source of our river, and however much that river may meander afterwards, we know whence it draws its real life [1]. With mythological

[1] Otfried Müller, in his *Prolegomena zu einer wissenschaftlichen Mythologie*, 1825, says (p. 285), 'Die Namen sind grösstentheils mit

beings there can be nothing earlier than their name, because they are names, in the true sense of the word, that is, they are *nomina*, or *gnomina*, concepts, by which alone we know a thing, however long we may have seen, or heard, or smelt, or felt it before.

The Names of Gods.

No doubt the sun was there before it was named, but not till he was named was there a Savitṛi, a *Pûshan*, a *Mitra*, a *Helios*, or an *Apollo*. It is curious that this should require any proof, for to any one acquainted with the true relation between what we call language and thought, it is self-evident. Some writers on Mythology speak of *Jupiter* and *Juno* as of a well-known couple, who quarrelled and scolded each other, and did a number of things more or less extraordinary, and whose names are really of no importance at all. The idea that *Jupiter* and *Apollo* and *Athene* are names and nothing but names, sounds almost like heresy to them. *Zeus*, according to them, was the child of *Rhea*, was swallowed and brought up again by *Kronos*, was educated in *Crete*, and, after conquering his father, became king of gods and men. I hold, on the contrary, that *Zeus* was born when *Dyaus*, the sky, was for the first time addressed as a masculine, and called father, *Dyaush-pitâ*, and that the whole of his subsequent career follows, almost as a matter of course, if we once know his true beginning[1].

den Mythen zugleich geworden, und haben eine eben so nationale und lokale Entstehung;' and again, 'Dass die Etymologie ein Haupthilfsmittel zur Erklärung der Mythen ist, möchte schwerlich bezweifelt werden können.'

[1] 'Das Wort macht, dass sich die Seele den in demselben gegebenen

It is far better, however, to leave mythological names which resist etymological analysis unexplained, than to attempt to explain them in violation of phonetic rules. The etymological domain of mythology must be allowed to remain sacred ground, which no one should enter with unwashen hands. There is really no conceit in saying this, for the same rule applies to all professions. It may sound conceited to outsiders, but as little as a chemist would allow a bishop, however clever he may be, to try experiments with his chemicals, can an etymologist allow a lawyer, however eminent as a pleader, to play pranks with roots, and suffixes, and phonetic laws. It is quite true that there are mishaps and even explosions in chemical laboratories, nor do philological laboratories enjoy an immunity from such accidents. But even an explosion may not be too much to pay, if only it teaches us what causes an explosion, and helps us to be more prudent in future. We must work on quietly and methodically, and on no account must we allow ourselves to be interrupted by men who do not know the A B C of our profession.

Scholars understand each other, and they soon yield to argument. What was more tempting than to identify the Sk. Samâsa (διασκευή) with Ὅμηρος; yet it was given up almost as soon as it was thought of, for the simple reason that s between two vowels does not appear in Greek as r. The Vedic Sôma, the Old Norse *Sôn* (gen. *sonar*), even the Greek οἶνος, seem closely allied drinks, yet who would identify

Gegenstand vorstellt.' See Humboldt, *Grundzüge des Allgemeinen Sprachtypus*, in Techmer's *Zeitschrift*, i. p. 390.

their names[1]. It seems sometimes very hard to surrender or, at all events, to mark as doubtful an etymology which is all right, except perhaps in one consonant, one *spiritus*, one shade of a vowel; but it must be done. Benfey's argument, for instance, that (p. 20) 'in Athana five elements of the Greek word correspond entirely or essentially and in the same order to five out of the seven elements in Âptyânâ,' ought never to be listened to. If all but one single letter agreed, the two words would not be the same; nay sometimes when all letters are the same, the two words may still be, and generally are, as distinct as *Himmel* and *Himâlaya*, *Atlas* and *Attila*. Though, for instance, every letter is the same in the two words, I at once surrendered the equation *Saramâ*= *Helena*, when it was pointed out to me that *Helena* had originally an initial Digamma; and I only ventured to defend the identification once more, when it had been shown on how slender evidence that initial Digamma rested, and how often a so-called Digamma had taken the place of an original s and y[2].

It is only due to the strict observation of phonetic laws that Comparative Mythology has gained the respect of true scholars, whether classical or oriental. As long as we deal with facts and laws, or, if that sounds too grand a name, with rules and analogies, we are on firm ground, and hold a fortress well-nigh impregnable. Another advantage is that all warfare, within or without that fortress, can be carried on according to the strict rules of war, and

[1] See, however, *Corpus Poet. Bor.* ii. 462.
[2] *The Science of Language*, ii. 586.

when we cross swords, we cross them with true swordsmen. Wild fighting is here out of the question, or if it should be attempted, it would only excite ridicule among the *preux chevaliers*. If a bold antagonist challenged the legitimacy of *Dyaus=Zeus*, we must meet him point by point; but if a wary critic challenges the diphthong oi in Φοῖβος=*Bhava*, we must yield at once. The diphthong oi does not point to Gu*n*a of u, not even in ἑτοῖμος=ἔτνμος, but to Gu*n*a of i, and the mistake has been as readily acknowledged as when Curtius (*Grundzüge*, p. 484) thought in former days that θοίνη could be derived from θύω, while it is really the same word as the Sanskrit dhenâ.

The Etymological Meaning must be Physical.

We have now to advance another step, and try to make good a position which at one time was most fiercely contested by all classical scholars, but must be defended at all hazards. Though the etymological analysis of names forms the only safe foundation of Comparative Mythology, it is the foundation only, and not the whole building. The etymology of a mythological name may be perfectly correct phonetically, and yet untenable for other reasons. It stands to reason that no etymology can be accepted which does not account for the original character of the god or hero to whom it belongs. It is clearly impossible, for instance, to derive *Hermes* from ἑρμηνεύειν[1], or *Erinnys* from ἐριννύειν, because such derivations would account for the later chapters only, but not for the introduction to the lives of those deities. If then we hold that the original

[1] *Selected Essays*, i. 447, and i. 622.

character of most Aryan gods was physical, we must also hold that no etymology of a mythological name can be acceptable which does not disclose the original physical character of the god[1].

Most of the etymologies suggested by later poets and philosophers, suffer from one and the same inherent defect; they are all calculated to explain the later development of a god, as it was known at the time, but not his original character. Popular etymologies too, a very rich source of modern myths and legends, are almost always vitiated by this defect[2].

Learned and Popular Etymologies of the Greeks and Romans.

It is difficult to find out whether Socrates and other philosophers were serious in the etymologies which they suggested of their gods and heroes, but many of their etymologies certainly leave the impression on our minds, as if their authors had never realized the difference between the plausible and the real in etymology, and as if they had never suspected that Greek names and Greek gods had passed through a long series of phases of historical growth before they became what they were in their time. When Plato quoted the old Etymology of Eros,

> *τὸν δ' ἤτοι θνητοὶ μὲν Ἔρωτα καλοῦσι ποτηνόν,*
> *ἀθάνατοι δὲ Πτέρωτα διὰ πτερόφυτον ἀνάγκην,*

he would have been little disturbed, I imagine, if he had been told that wings are a modern idea in Greek mythology, and that no Greek word ever loses an

[1] 'The Nature-god,' as Welcker says, 'became enveloped in a web of mythical fables, and emerged as a divine, humanised personality.' See Miss A. Swanwick, *Aeschylus*, p. xxi.

[2] Lersch, *Sprachphilosophie der Alten*, iii. 108.

initial πτ[1]. When Apollon is derived from ἀπολλύναι, to destroy, the question seems hardly to have occurred, how the rich growth of Apollonic legends could be traced back to the one central concept of a destroying deity. Nor does it seem to have struck those ancient etymologists that a name cannot possibly have more than one source. For we find *Apollon* derived, not only from ἀπολλύναι (Aeschylus, *Agam.* 1080) but likewise from ἀπελαύνειν, to drive away, and ἀπολύειν, to relieve[2]. The name of *Ares* is explained παρὰ τὴν ἀρὰν τὴν γενομένην βλάβην ἐκ τοῦ πολέμου· ἢ παρὰ τὸ τὴν χάραν, χάρης, καὶ ἄρης· ἢ παρὰ τὸ ἀείρω; that of Achilleus παρὰ τὸ ἄχος λύειν· ἰατρὸς γὰρ ἦν. ἢ διὰ τὸ ἄχος, ὅ ἐστι λύπην, ἐπενεγκεῖν τῇ μητρὶ καὶ τοῖς Ἰλιεῦσι, ἢ διὰ τὸ μὴ θίγειν χείλεσι χιλῆς, ὅ ἐστι τροφῆς; that of Helena παρὰ τὸ ἕλω τὸ ἑλκύω, ἢ πρὸς τὸ ἴδιον κάλλος ἕλκουσα τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, διὰ τὸ πολλοὺς ἑλεῖν τῷ κάλλει· ἢ παρὰ τὸ Ἑλλάς κ.τ.λ.

But while these gratuitous etymologies vanished generally as soon as they had been suggested, there are others which became popular, and entered into the very life of mythology. This need not surprise us, for even in modern languages what has been called popular etymology continues to exercise the same irresistible charm. Who does not think that *God* in English has something to do with *good*? Does not *barrow*, a burial mound (Ger. *Berg*), involuntarily call up the idea of a *barrow*, a wheel-barrow (Ger. *Bahre*)? How often have the *cocoa-nut* tree and the *cacao tree* been mixed up together, till at last *cacao* was actually

[1] Lobeck, *Aglaophamos*, ii. p. 861.

[2] Ὁ ἀπελαύνων καὶ ἀπολύων ἀφ' ἡμῶν τὰς νόσους; *Etym. Magn.*, Lersch, l. c., iii. p. 111.

spelt *cocoa*. When we use *duck* as a term of endearment, we can hardly help thinking of a *duck*, and when we speak of a *lark*, as a game, the idea of the merry lark suggests itself, whether we like it or not. I have treated this subject more fully in a chapter on 'Modern Mythology' in the second volume of my *Science of Language*[1], and I need not therefore say more at present than that, as such things are done in the dry tree, we must not be surprised to meet with them in the green also. Homer delights in such offhand etymologies. In Od. XIX. 406, Autolykos suggests the name of *Odysseus* or *Odyseus* for his grandson, because he himself πολλοῖσι γὰρ ἔγωγε ὀδυσσάμενος τόδ' ἱκάνω. Because Hector protected Ilion, therefore his son is called *Astyanax* by the people, though the father himself called him Skamandrios (Il. VI. 402; XXII. 506).

Aeneas is called by his name (Hymn. Aphrod. IV. 198):

οὔνεκα μ' αἰνόν
ἔσχ' ἄχος, οὔνεκ' ἄρα βρότου ἀνέρος ἔμπεσον εὐνῇ.

Even prior to Homer, etymology seems to have given birth to new myths. We can hardly suppose that the legend of the two gates of the dreams, the one being made of horn, the other of ivory, sprang up by itself; for why should these two materials have been imagined as peculiarly appropriate? If, on the contrary, we suppose that Homer, or even the poets before Homer, knew of dreams which deceive (ἐλεφαίρονται) and of others which come true (ἔτυμα κραίνουσι), popular etymology may well have suggested that the gates through which the former passed were made of ivory

[1] See also R. Fritzsche, *Über die Anfänge des Poesie*, 1885, p. 22.

(ἐλέφαντι), while those of the latter were made of horn (κεράεσσι) [1].

The number of myths which owe their origin to a mistaken or popular etymology seems larger than was formerly supposed. *Tritogeneia*, for instance, as a name for Athene, was, no doubt, a difficult word, but the statement that τριτώ was an Aeolic name for head, and that therefore τρῖτογένεια meant 'head-born,' rests on very slender authority. Wherever there was a lake or a river of the name of *Triton*, Athene was fabled to have been born. Herodotus (IV. 180) refers to an old legend which spoke of the lake *Tritonis* in Lybia as the birthplace of Athene. Pausanias (IX. 33, 7) suggests *Triton*, a forest-stream in Boeotia, or *Triton*, a spring in Arcadia (VIII. 26, 6).

Hermes Argeiphontes is now explained by most scholars as Hermes, the bright shining. But the Greeks took it as meaning the 'killer of Argos,' and we know how large a cluster of legends sprang from this false etymology, though none of them appear, as yet, in Homer or Hesiod [2].

The stories told of *Dionysos* being born on a hill called Nysa must be old, for they are mentioned as generally known by the poet of the hymns to Dionysos (Hom. Hymn. XXV. 6; XXVI. 8; see also Il. VI. 133). Still, it seems as if his name alone had suggested *Nysa* as his birthplace, particularly as several other places are mentioned in which the child of Zeus and Semele is said to have been born.

[1] Lersch, l.c., iii. p. 6.

[2] Mehli, *Hermes*, p. 31. The first mention of Ἄργος γηγενής is in Aesch. *Prometheus*, 568 seq. See, however, Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, i. p. 289. The change of Argos into a peacock cannot be older than the introduction of peacocks into Europe.

Haritas and Charites.

A consideration of these ancient mythological etymologies may seem useless in the present state of our knowledge, yet it may prove useful if it teaches us what to avoid in our own attempts at explaining the meaning of the names of ancient gods and heroes. Thus, when looking out for an etymology of the *Charites*, it would seem very natural to take them as goddesses of grace (χάρις), just as we take *Nike* as the goddess of victory. But then comes the question, why *Charis* should have been the wife of *Hephaistos*, like *Aphrodite*, why the Charites bathe and dress Aphrodite, why, in fact, they should have entered into the very thick of Greek mythology. If Charis and the Charites are ancient goddesses, they must have started from some nook or corner in nature, and that nook or corner can only be discovered by their name. *Charis*, as I have tried to prove, is the same word as the Sanskrit Harit, and the Haritas in the Veda are the bright horses of the rising sun. Without therefore in the least supposing that the Charites, too, must have passed through that equine stage, we are justified in tracing both the *Charites* and the Haritas back to the same source, the bright rays of the rising sun.

It may seem difficult, no doubt, to trace so abstract a concept as the Greek χάρις back to a root har, which means to shine, to glow; still we see in Sanskrit how this root lends itself to the most varied applications, and what is real in Sanskrit may surely be admitted as possible in other Aryan languages.

In Sanskrit, by the side of har, we find the fuller form ghar, to glow. From it we have such words as ghṛ*ina*, heat; ghṛ*inâ*, pity; ghṛ*inin*, pitiful, kind;

gh*rini*, heat, sunshine; gharma, heat (θερμός), summer, kettle, hot milk; gh*rita*, melted butter, fat, etc.

The root har we find again in the verb h*rinî*te, he is angry, lit. he is hot against a person; and in the verb haryate, he desires, i.e. he is hot after something. It also is used in the sense of to be pleased with, and to love, as in haryata, desirable, *gratus*, while in hrî, to be hot, it has come to mean to be ashamed. Haras means heat, fire, and force. Hari, hari*na*, harit, and harita, all meaning originally shining and bright, have been used as names of colour, and assumed meanings which sometimes we must render by yellow, sometimes by green. Out of these two, hari and harit, have come mythological names of the horses of the sun or of Indra.

Here then we see clearly that the ideas of shining, glowing, being hot, can be modified so as to express warmth, kindness of heart, pity, pleasure, love, shame, and likewise fierceness, anger, and displeasure.

That being so, I see no difficulty in tracing Greek words, such as χαροπός, bright-eyed (Sk. haryaksha), χαίρω, I rejoice, χαρίζομαι, I am kind and favourable, χαρά, joy, χάρις, brightness, grace, from one and the same root har, which in Latin has also left us *gratus* and *gratia* in all their various applications [1].

[1] It would seem hardly credible that this elaborate etymological argument should have been met by Prof. Gruppe (p. 98) by a mere appeal to other authorities. These questions cannot be settled by authorities, but only by facts and reasonings. Those who have neither facts nor reasonings to oppose to an argument must learn to abstain. If they cannot form an opinion of their own they have no right to try to influence the opinion of others; and if they imagine that nothing can be true except what all scholars, whether competent or incompetent, agree upon, they must learn to say with Pilate, What is truth?

Fors, Fortuna.

In Latin the *Gratiae* are supposed to have been borrowed from Greece, and not to be of native growth. *Charis*, however, originally the dawn, the Vedic Harit, the horse of the sun, seems to me hidden under the old goddess *Fors*, the more modern *Fortuna*. To the Romans, no doubt, *Fors* was the goddess *quae fert*, who brings good or bad things, and I do not wonder at this natural, and therefore popular etymology being preferred by classical scholars. They ask very naturally, why, when there is so natural an etymology of *fors* from *ferre*, should we go out of our way to discover a more difficult one. My answer is the same as ever. Old gods do not spring from such abstract and faded concepts as *ferre*, to bring. And *Fors* is not a mere philosophical fancy, but an old deity, whose worship flourished all over Italy[1], and cannot possibly be classed with the *Gratiae*, who are borrowed from Greece, nor with such abstract goddesses as *Victoria*, *Honor*, *Virtus*, *Spes*, or *Bonus Eventus*.

No doubt the religion of the Romans has admitted many abstract goddesses; but, if we inquire more closely, we shall find that they are mostly representative of subjective qualities, such as *Fides*, *Spes*, *Virtus*, *Pavor*, *Pallor*, *Honor*, *Victoria*, *Concordia*, and *Pudicitia*, not of outward or objective powers, such as *Fors* and *Fortuna*, a goddess of flesh and bone, as powerful as *Janus* and *Jupiter*, and more powerful than *Venus* or *Bona Dea*.

It might no doubt be argued that, if we have in Greek such abstract goddesses as Μοῖρα or Αἶσα, we

[1] Preller, *Römische Mythologie*, p. 352.

seem hardly justified in objecting on principle to a Latin goddess like *Fors*, in the sense of a Bringer. But, first of all, Italian mythology is not the same as Greek, and secondly, Μοῖρα, at least in Homer, shows no traces of that truly mythological character which we can easily discover in *Fors Primogenia*. I believe that throughout Homer we might take Μοῖρα as a simple appellative, meaning share or fate, without destroying the poetical character of any passage in which it occurs. I remember neither parents nor offspring of Moira and Aisa in Homer, nor do I think that either in the Iliad or in the Odyssey are prayers ever addressed to either of them. In later times, no doubt, they assume new names and new characters, but this seems chiefly due to their being joined or even identified with such ancient goddesses as the Erinyes, Keres, and Charites.

One of the oldest names of *Fors* is *Primogenia* or *Primigenia*[1]. Why should a mere bringer, a goddess bringing good or bad luck, be called first-born? We know who the first-born deity is in all Aryan religion. It is the Dawn, agriyâ[2], or the morning sun, agriya*h*. But Fortuna is not only called *Primigenia*, she is represented also as the daughter of Jupiter. One inscription reads: *Fortuna(i) Diovo(s) fileia(i) primo-(c)enia(i)*; other inscriptions give *Fortunae Jovis puero primigeniae*. This *puer* or this *filia Jovis primigenia* can hardly be different from the duhitâ Diva*h*, the daughter of Dyaus, who comes first (prathamâ) at each morning prayer (pûrvahûtau)[3].

[1] H. Jordan's *Symbolae ad Historiam Religionum Italicarum alterae*, Regimontii, 1885.
[2] Pâraskara Gṛihya-Sûtras, III. 3, 5, 10.
[3] Rv. I. 123, 2.

But the *Fors* or *Fortuna* held even a more exalted position, for Cicero (*De Div.* 41, 85) tells us of an old sanctuary and oracle at *Praeneste*, where Fortuna was represented as holding *Jupiter* and *Juno* on her lap, and giving the breast to the young Jupiter[1]. Could such a goddess have been a modern, abstract deity? Is it not more likely that she was an old Dawn goddess, represented here, as elsewhere, as the beginning of all things, the mother of the gods (Rv. I. 113, 19), carrying her bright child (rusadvatsâ); also, from another point of view, as the daughter of Dyaus (Rv. VII. 75, 4), and the wife of Sûrya, the sun (Rv. VII. 75, 5)?

There are lessons to be learnt, as I have often tried to show, from mythologies which have no genealogical connection with the mythologies of Greece and Rome, but which after all exhibit to us the reflection of the same nature on the same mirror, the human mind. What one knows to be real in other mythologies, one feels to be possible at least, in Greek and Latin. Now there is a goddess Fortuna in Egyptian, namely *Renenet*, and this *Renenet*, like our Fortuna, is represented as suckling the infant *Horus*. Professor Le Page Renouf, without knowing anything of my attempted identification of Fortune with the Dawn, says, 'In whose lap can the Sun be nursed more fitly than in that of the Dawn?' (*Hibbert Lectures*, p. 161.)

There are few praises bestowed upon *Ushas*, the dawn, which cannot be transferred to *Fortuna*, if we

[1] Preller's *Römische Mythologie*, p. 561. Jordan, l. c., p. 8, makes the important remark, 'scilicet per totum religionum italicarum orbem conjugia deorum quae quidem videantur esse maxime temporibus antiquissimis obviam sunt, liberorum procreatio nulla est unquam.'

take her as the bright light of each day, worshipped from the earliest times as the *Fortuna Huiusce Diei*. *Fortuna* had one temple near the *Circus Maximus*, another in the *Campus Martius*, and her own festival on the 30th of July. This *Fortuna Huiusce Diei* was very much what we should call the goddess of *Good Morning*. There was likewise a *Fortuna Virgo*, reminding us of the *Feronia* as *Juno Virgo*[1], and her festival fell on the same day as that of the *Mater Matuta*. We read of a *Fortuna Respiciens* and *Obsequens*, a *Bona Fortuna*, *Domina*, *Regina*, *Tutela*, *Opifera*, *Supera*, *Victrix*. All these epithets, though meant, no doubt, for the goddess of good fortune, are applicable likewise to the Dawn.

If then the concept of Good and Evil Fortune can have been evolved from that of Dawn, the phonetic transition of *Harit* into *Fors* and *Fortuna* causes no difficulty. The Sanskrit word gharma, kettle, appears in Latin as *formus*, and *fors*, *fortis* would correspond to a Sk. har-ti, instead of har-it. The further development of *fors* to *fortuna* finds analogies in *portunus*, *portumnus*, and *portus*, in *Neptunus*, *Tutunus*, etc.

I do not venture to say that the identification of *Fortuna* with *Harit* is beyond the reach of doubt. Far from it. The most natural objection will be the same which Curtius at first brought forward against the equation Harit=Χάρις. 'What shall we do,' he said, with the appellatives χάρις, with χαρά, χαίρω, χαρίζομαι, χαρίεις, etc.? That question has by this time been answered[2]. But in our case the difficulty is even less, for such

[1] Preller, *Römische Mythologie*, p. 377.
[2] *The Science of Language*, ii. 475.

words as *forte, fortuito, forsit, forsitan, forsan,* must all have passed through the stage marked by *Fors*, no longer as mere Dawn, but as the Dawn who ushers in the day with all its chances, as the 'Morgenstunde' which has 'Gold im Munde' for those who know how to earn it, but who may be likewise a fatal dawn, and the revenger of dark crimes. If we derived *Fors* from *ferre*, we should equally have to admit that *Fors* had been changed into some kind of deity, a deity of chance, before *forte* or *forte fortuna* could mean 'by chance,' as opposed to *providentiâ*. Still I do not wish to speak confidently on *Fors=Harit*[1]. There are many things in Comparative Mythology which, for the present at least, can be put forward as hypothetical only. And it was for that very reason that I wished to show by an extreme case why even an uncertain etymology, if only based on physical phenomena, is preferable to a purely rationalistic derivation, however unobjectionable it may seem, both as to the phonetic form and the ordinary meaning of a mythological name.

Nomina and Cognomina.

And here a new problem presents itself to us which

[1] I had given an extract from this chapter in my *Biographies of Words*. Some of my critics in the *Academy* (1888, i. pp. 80, 98, 116, 135, 151, 170, 190) failed to follow my argument that there is no sure instance of *bhar* ever taking the o-grade in Latin, and that therefore the derivation of *fors* from *ghar* is really less objectionable than that from *bhar*. I never said that *fer* could not become *for*; I simply said it did not, and I tried to account for the only apparent exception, namely, *fordus*. I thought I could not explain what I meant better than in citing the words of de Saussure, *Le latin est fort chiche de ses a_2*. Of course, such phonetic tendencies may be looked upon as purely fortuitous; still it is well to note them. Vigfusson's idea of connecting *fors* with *bera at* and the noun *at-burdr* brings in quite another cluster of ideas, in German *sich zutragen*, which have little to do with *ferre*, to bear, to carry.

has to be carefully examined, because it is due to a want of a clear perception of all its bearings that different scholars have diverged so widely in their views of ancient mythology.

Supposing that *Athene* and *Daphne* were both originally names of the Dawn, should we be right in saying that they were one and the same deity? Many scholars, I know, take that view, and are inclined to trace the whole mass of Greek or any other mythology back to a small number of physical sources. They look, in fact, on the numerous deities as mere representatives of a few prominent phenomena in nature. If Apollon and Helios, for instance, can be shown to have been originally intended for the sun, they would treat them as one and the same divine subject. If Hermes betrayed a solar character, he would share the same fate. Dr. Roscher, for instance, in a very learned essay on Apollon and Mars, after showing the same solar elements in the Greek and in the Italic god, treats these two gods as identical [1].

We cannot deny that such a treatment of mythology has a certain justification, and we may see from such papers as Dr. Roscher's, that it may lead to very valuable results. But we must not allow it to interfere with the etymological treatment of mythological names. According to the principles of the etymological school, a deity begins from the moment it is named. It could have no existence as a deity before it was named. In Sanskrit, for instance, it is no doubt the sun that is meant by such names as Sûrya, Âditya, Savitri, Mitra, and in certain cases even

[1] *Studien zur vergleichenden Mythologie, I. Apollon und Mars*, 1873 (p. 5).

by Agni, Pûshan, and other names. But every one of these names constitutes a separate mythological individuality, and must be treated accordingly. Were we to say that because Mitra is meant for the sun, and Savitṛi is meant for the sun, therefore both are the same deity, we should be right perhaps logically, but certainly not mythologically. In mythology it is the name which makes the god, and keeps one deity distinct from the other, and it is the name alone which remains unchanged, however much everything else, the character, the attributes, the legends and the worship, may change. There is in the name and in the name alone that continuity which cannot be broken, which lasts through centuries, nay, which binds together the mythology of countries as distant from one another as India and Iceland. Other things may be like each other, but the names alone can be said to be identical, and in the name alone therefore rests the identity of mythological personalities. Apollon and Mars may share many things in common, as Dr. Roscher has clearly shown, but they are different from their very birth, they are different as mythological subjects. It would be possible to find deities, not only in Greek and Latin mythology, but in almost every religion representing, like Apollon and Mars, the sun, as determining the order of years, seasons, and months, as bringing back every spring the life of nature, as conquering heroes, as patrons of clans, and towns, and states. But though we might compare them, we should never think of identifying them.

Here lies the fundamental difference between what I call the Etymological and the Analogical Schools of Comparative Mythology. I do not mean to de-

preciate the results of the Analogical School. I only wish to keep the two distinct, and, by keeping them distinct, to make them both work with greater advantage for one common end.

And this distinction is by no means always so easy as it may appear. In the earliest stage of mythological language, all names were no doubt *cognomina*, rather than *nomina*, intended for the sun or the moon, the sky or the dawn, the earth or the sea. Every one of these aspects of nature had many names, and it was due to influences which are absolutely beyond the reach of our knowledge, whether one or the other of these *cognomina* should become a *nomen*, a new centre of a number of *cognomina*. This period in the growth of mythology, the settling of *nomina* and *cognomina* of the principal deities of a religious or political community has hardly ever been taken into consideration, and yet its influence on the growth and organization of mythology must have been very important.

In Homer *Apollon* has, no doubt, become a substantive deity. Still *Phœbos* occurs by himself about nine times in the Iliad, and *Phœbos Apollon* or *Apollon Phœbos* are found nearly half as often as Apollon by himself or with his usual epithets of ἑκάεργος, ἀργυρότοξος, etc. In the Odyssey and the Hymns, *Phœbos* by himself occurs eleven times, *Phœbos Apollon* eighteen times, while *Apollon* by himself or with his usual epithets is found more than twice as often as the two together.

It was therefore quite possible that Apollon and Phœbos should have remained independent deities, nay we may say that to certain poets Phœbos was a

distinct person from Apollon, quite as much as Helios. But in time these two names of *Phoebos* and *Apollon* converged so much that to certain minds they presented one idea only, though even then it was always *Apollon* who was determined by *Phoebos*, not *Phoebos* by *Apollon*.

It is but seldom that we can watch this process of crystallisation in mythology. When we become acquainted with ancient mythology through literary channels that process is mostly finished. One out of many names has become central, while all the rest have clustered round it, as mere mythological epithets.

Dr. Mehlis [1] has pointed out how, in the case of *Hermes* or *Hermeias*, the name of *Argeiphontes*, or the two names, *Diaktoros Argeiphontes*, are still sufficiently independent to allow Greek poets to use them by themselves. But he adds that with the establishment of the dynasty of Zeus, the position of Hermes in the circle of the gods became essentially changed. This period, characterised by the hegemony of Zeus, differed from the pre-homeric time chiefly by the anthropomorphising of all the gods, and the gradual disappearance of their physical meaning. The god of the morning-sun, the true Argeiphontes [2], occupied a very prominent place in the former cult of nature among the Greeks, and was then very closely related to the god of heaven, *Zeus*. This former pre-eminence he retained even in the Olympian cult, but his original function became more obscured, and the

[1] *Hermes*, pp. 38, 130.

[2] Decharme, *Mythologie de la Grèce Ancienne*, p. 143, a most thoughtful and useful work.

Olympian Hermes grew as different from his physical prototype as Zeus, the father of gods and men, from the god of the bright sky.

Very little progress has as yet been made in analysing the transition from the physical Aryan mythology to the Olympian mythology[1], as we find it in Homer, and in distinguishing the elements which entered into the final composition of each Olympian god. Each of these gods is surrounded by a number of epithets, but while some of these epithets are adjectives, in the true sense of the word, others seem to have possessed originally a more independent and substantive character, so much so that they can be used by themselves and without what may be called the proper name of the Olympian deity.

And here a new difficulty arises, namely, how to distinguish modern epithets from ancient *cognomina*. We are told that the *Erinyes* were called *Eumenides* and σεμναὶ θεαί, in order to indicate different sides of their character. This may be so, and if we keep true to the principle that the original character of every ancient god and goddess must be physical, the name of *Erinyes*, i. e. the Dawn-goddesses, alone fulfils that requirement. But when the *Erinyes* are identified with the Ἀραί, this does not prove that the Ἀραί or imprecations were not originally independent creations of Greek mythology, particularly as even in later times (Soph. Electra 112) *Arae* and *Erinyes* are separately invoked. The same applies to the *Moirae* who, originally quite distinct from the Erinyes, are afterwards

[1] See some good remarks on this subject in *Some Aspects of Zeus and Apollo Worship*, by C. F. Keary; Roy. Soc. of Lit. xii. part 2, 1880.

treated as children of the same mother, and at last mixed up with them so as to become almost indistinguishable.

It may be quite true that the problem here alluded to is one that admits of no quite satisfactory solution, for the simple reason that the period during which the crystallisation of ancient divine names took place is beyond the reach of knowledge and almost of conjecture. Still it is well to remember that every organized mythology has necessarily to pass through such a period, and that in Greece particularly the well-ordered Olympian mythology, such as we find it in Homer, presupposes a more chaotic period. Etymology may in time supply us with a thread enabling us to find our way through the dark chambers of the most ancient mythological labyrinth, and we may even now lay it down as a rule that every name, whether *nomen* or *cognomen*, which admits of a physical interpretation is probably the result of an independent creative act, represents in fact an individual mythological concept which for a time, however short, enjoyed an independent existence. Thus in Sanskrit Apâm napât, the son of the waters, is no doubt one of the many names of Agni, fire; but in the beginning it expressed an independent mythological concept, the lightning sprung from the clouds, or the sun emerging from the waters[1], and it retained that independent character for a long time in the sacrificial phraseology of the Brâhmanas.

Sârameya, the son of Saramâ, was in Sanskrit as independent a name as *Hermeias* in Greek. They both meant originally the same thing, the child of the

[1] Rv. I. 22, 6, apâm nápâtam ávase Savitâram úpa stuhi.

dawn. But while Hermeias became a centre of attraction and a germ which developed into an Olympian deity, the Vedic Sârameya dwindled away into a mere name of a dog. The germ was the same, but the result was totally different.

The Haritas in Sanskrit never became anything but the horses of the sun; in Greek they developed into *Charites*; in Latin, possibly, into the *Fors*, *Fortuna*.

If then we ask the question once more, whether *Daphne* and *Athene*, being both originally names of the dawn, were therefore one and the same deity, we should say No. They both sprang from a concept of the dawn, but while one name grew into an Olympian goddess, the other was arrested at an earlier stage of its growth, and remained the name of a heroine, the beloved of Apollo, who like the dawn, vanished before the embraces of the rising sun. Etymologically *Athene* and *Daphne* can be traced back to the Vedic Ahanâ and Dahanâ with almost the same certainty with which the Vedic Dyaush-pitar has been identified with Ζεὺς πατήρ, *Jupiter*, and *Týr*. If there are still philosophers who hold that such coincidences are purely accidental, we must leave them to their own devices. The Copernican system is true, though there are some Fijians left who doubt it. But if for practical purposes we believe that in spectral analysis the same lines prove the existence of the same elements in the sun as well as on the earth, we may rest satisfied with the lesson of Jupiter, such as it is, and feel convinced that, as there was an Aryan language, before a word of Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin had been spoken, there was an Aryan mythology, before there was an Æneid, an Iliad, or a Veda.

LECTURE XVIII.

THE ANALOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SCHOOLS.

II. The Analogical School.

IF Comparative Mythology had been strictly confined to the minute analysis of mythological names, it would perhaps not have become so popular a science, but it would have done more real and lasting good. It would have remained a subject for specialists; and as little as people ignorant of Greek attempt to write Greek verse, would scholars ignorant of Sanskrit have meddled with Comparative Mythology.

But the subject proved too attractive. When scholars and philosophers had once perceived clearly that Zeus and Jupiter lived in the Veda as Dyaus, no wonder that they wished to look for themselves in order to find out whether other Greek and Roman deities might not be discovered in the same hiding-place. Thus there arose very soon a new school of Comparative Mythologists, which in order to distinguish it from the *Etymological*, may be called the *Analogical* school. The name is perhaps not quite adequate, but I cannot think of a better one. Its best known representatives in Germany were Welcker, Preller, von Hahn, in France Bréal and Decharme, in England first and foremost, Sir G. W. Cox, and more recently Professor John Rhŷs in his Hibbert Lectures.

They generally accepted the results of the etymological school, though not without occasional protests, and they did excellent work by showing how everything that seemed irrational and disjointed in classical mythology fell into its right place and assumed a new meaning as soon as the whole *iners moles* had been reanimated once more by the spirit so long buried and forgotten in the names of gods and heroes. And this revival affected not classical mythology only, but the mythology of other Aryan nations also, as shown in the German mythology of Grimm, and in numerous more recent publications on Celtic, Slavonic, and particularly on Indian mythology.

Characters common to Gods and Heroes of different Names.

The analogical school accepts the common origin of the mythologies of the various Aryan nations as an established fact, and its best representatives have concentrated their work chiefly on collecting mythological stories which show the same general characteristics, however different the names of the gods and heroes may be of whom such myths and stories are related. The names are of secondary consequence to them. What interests them chiefly are such broad mythological outlines as that the great heroes were often illegitimate children, the father a god or a stranger, the mother a native princess; that many of these heroes were believed to bring destruction to their father-in-law, were exposed, nursed by animals or by childless shepherds, distinguished themselves in their youth among their play-fellows, had to do menial service, but generally returned victorious from their fights and labours, killed their enemies, liberated

their mothers, succeeded to the throne, built a new city, and generally died an extraordinary death. This, as can easily be shown, is the common frame that would fit the mythic legends of such heroes as *Perseus*, *Herakles*, *Œdipus*, *Amphion* and *Zethos*, *Pelias* and *Neleus*, *Leukastos* and *Parrhesios*, *Theseus* in Greece, *Romulus* and *Remus* in Italy, *Siegfried*, *Wittich*, and *Wolfdidrich* in Germany, *Kyros* in Persia, Karna and Krishna in India [1].

Though I have always recognised the perfectly legitimate character of this line of mythological research, I must confess that I have also on several occasions expressed my misgivings. If mythological names may be perfectly identical in two or more Aryan languages, and yet, when more closely examined, turn out to spring from quite distinct sources, the same characters may surely occur in different Aryan mythologies, the same legends may be told of them, and yet they may have started from very different beginnings. I still remember the time which has been so well described by Scherer in his book on *Jacob Grimm*, when 'every huntsman who in defence thrusts his fist into the jaws of a lion was said to remind us of *Tyr*, the Teutonic god of war, who as a pledge puts his hand into the mouth of the *Fenris* wolf [2]. Whenever closely-guarded women were carried off, there could be no doubt that the god Freyr was hidden behind the thief, and the beautiful giantess *Gerda* behind the stolen maiden. As soon as a giant was killed, people sniffed the god of thunder. Whatever carried a red rag was strongly

[1] Hahn, *Sagwissenschaftliche Studien*, p. 340.
[2] *Jacob Grimm*, von Wilhelm Scherer, 2 Aufl.; 1885, p. 287.

suspected of a mysterious connection with the red-bearded thunderer. The ass which vomited gold in two ways could be descended from *Wodan* only, the divine giver of wealth, till he turned out to be a harmless character borrowed from an Italian novel.' Like Grimm, therefore, I have always said, Let us distinguish as well as compare.

If we allow ourselves to be guided by analogy only, there are few stories, nay few historical events which could not be fitted into one or other of Hahn's frames. Mr. Tylor has shown how easily the nursery 'Song of Sixpence' could be interpreted as a solar myth, and nearly all the more or less ponderous squibs that have been written of late years against Comparative Mythology, are intended to show the dangers of the Analogical School. Napoleon, Mr. Bright, and even I myself have been dissolved into solar legends, and it was soon perceived that so little ingenuity was required for this kind of witticism that many a heavy-laden soul has tried his hand at it. Here nothing can safeguard the mythologist but proper names and other more or less essential surroundings. If we read that 'Helios goes to rest or to sleep,' we shall hardly, in spite of Mr. H. Spencer's pleading, think of a gentleman of the name of Helios; while if we read 'the sun of Rome is set,' it is equally clear that we have simply to deal with an historical fact, expressed metaphorically. Still we must be on our guard, and more particularly against one danger of which our would-be satirists seem hardly to be aware, namely, our mistaking historical characters, who are spoken of in mythological language, or who are actually introduced into the cycle of ancient

mythology, for mythological beings—I mean, mythological in origin and name. Not only of ancient heroes such as Theodoric, Karl der Grosse, Friedrich Barbarossa, but even of Friedrich der Grosse, legends are told which belonged originally to purely solar heroes. If then their real names should by chance lend themselves to solar interpretations, and if the circumstances of their birth and death, the names of parents, brothers and sisters, should favour the same theory, there might be real danger of mistaking reality for myth. But such accidents must be rare, and I know as yet of none that has really happened, while we know that there is hardly a country which has not taken its most ancient history from the treasures of mythology.

Rudra, Apollon, Wuotan.

The analogical school differs, however, from the purely psychological, of which we shall have to treat afterwards. It always presupposes a common historical origin of the mythologies, as of the languages, of the Aryan nations; and on that ground claims the right to look upon similar legends as mere varieties of one original type. It does not look upon mythological coincidences as simply the inevitable outcome of our common human nature, but traces all coincidences back to a common historical source. Thus when Professor Leo, in his History of the German People (1854, p. 27), tried to show that *Wuotan* or *Odin* closely resembles the Vedic Rudra and the *Apollon* of epic poetry, he meant that all three sprang from one and the same original concept.

Grimm too, when speaking of *Wuotan*, says[1]: 'He resembles *Apollon*, inasmuch as from him proceed contagious diseases and their cure; any severe illness is the stroke of God, and Apollon's arrows scatter pestilence. The Gauls also imagined that *Apollon* drove away disease ("Apollinem morbos depellere," Caes., B. G., 6, 17): and *Wodan's* magic alone can cure *Balder's* lame horse. The raven on the god's shoulder exactly fits *Apollon*, and still more plainly the circumstance that *Odin* invented the poetic art, and *Saga* is his divine daughter, just as the Greek *Muses*, though daughters of Zeus, are under Apollon's protection and in his train.'

Now what does all this mean? We must try to think it out clearly. It may mean that originally there was a common Aryan concept of a Somebody, sending diseases and curing diseases, represented with ravens on his shoulders, and as fond of poetry. Such a Somebody, however, could not assume any real personality without a name, and we are asked to believe that, whatever his original name may have been, that name was lost, and replaced afterwards by the name of *Rudra* in Sanskrit, of *Wotan* in German, and of *Apollon* in Greek. Unless we assume this, we lose all historical continuity, and our comparison becomes purely psychological, which it is not meant to be.

In an article on *Wuotan*, to which I have referred before, we read[2]: 'Whatever common traits the three gods, *Apollon*, *Wuotan*, and *Rudra* offer, such as their medical knowledge, their relation to singing and poetry, their correspondence reveals itself most de-

[1] *Teutonic Mythology*, vol. i. p. 149.
[2] Kuhn's *Zeitschrift*, x. p. 272.

cidedly in the conception of their natural appearance. All the three gods are represented as wild and mighty figures, driving along with dishevelled hair in storms and clouds, and hurling their fatal arrows on the earth. In the Iliad XX. 39, Apollon is called ἀκερσεκόμης, with unshorn hair. Like the night, he descends from the heights of Olympus, and sends from the fearful-sounding bow the deadly arrow among men and beasts. According to Kuhn's [1] plausible explanation his epithet Λοξίας, like Λοξώ, the name of the daughter of Boreas, defines him as the god approaching in a thunderstorm athwart the air. *Rudra* is called in the Veda *kapardin*, with braided and knotted hair, or *kshayadvîra*, man-destroying. He is not, as Leo supposes, the welkin beneath the blue dome of heaven, but the god of those destructive hurricanes which generally visit India several days before the setting in of the rainy season. Therefore the Indians implored him that his arrow, fatal to men and cows, might spare them. In the same way no one has failed to recognise in *Wuotan*, when rushing through the air at the head of the wild hunt, the god of snow and thunderstorms, however his ethical character may, even at the earliest time that we know, have obscured his physical elements. Rückert, it is true, supposes the conception of *Wuotan* as the god of snow and thunderstorm to be a later corruption, and discovers the elementary foundation of his character in the power residing in the higher regions of the welkin and likewise of the sun. As, however, the sun appears nowhere in the Veda as an

[1] Kuhn's *Zeitschrift*, iii. p. 335. Fröhde (*Bezzenberger, Beiträge*, iii. 8) derives Loxias from the root *laksh*, to aim. I doubt whether this root exists outside Sanskrit, but Kuhn's etymology also is doubtful.

attribute of *Rudra*, but only of Siva, a later development of *Rudra*, it cannot have belonged either to the concept of that original god of whom *Wuotan*, *Apollon*, and *Rudra* are supposed to be only three different national representatives. What is common to all and helps to explain also their later ethical character, is their dark approach in the hurricane, and their weapon, fatal to men and beasts. Their original elementary character therefore can only have been the storm.'

Here we have a clear statement of the leading principles of the analogical school. We begin with an elementary concept which, of course, like every concept must have had a name. That name, however, may be lost, or, at all events, is not considered essential. The name changed after a time, or was replaced by new dialectic or national names. The character also of the deity was modified, yet in what such deities of different names and likewise of considerably modified characters share in common, we have a right to recognise their original elementary concept.

This method of studying mythology is both interesting and useful; and yet I cannot overcome a certain uncomfortable feeling whenever I try to follow it and apply it myself. It is a feeling similar to that which a numismatist has when he sorts a number of coins which by their material, their shape, and their weight indicate with sufficient clearness what they are, but which, by continued wear and tear, have lost every trace of their original image and superscription. If he is accustomed to coins, one small remnant of a single letter in a certain place will tell him that it is, say, a coin of Alexander, coined in India. Yet he will hesitate and wait, and put his coin aside for a while as of

doubtful origin. But now let the name of Alexander appear, how different will his feelings be! It seems to me that there is the same difference between the determination of a myth with or without a name. Let the *Haritas* of the Veda be as different as possible from the *Charites* of the Greeks, yet as soon as we know their etymology, we know that they belong more closely together genealogically than even the *Charites* and the *Horae*.

It may be that my strong belief in the etymological origin of all human thought, and my life-long researches into the etymologies of mythological names, have made me rather prejudiced against what I call the *analogical* method. I see its usefulness as helping us to classify mythological characters under general categories, as von Hahn, for instance, has done with great success. It may also help us in supplying defective portions of one myth by reference to a cognate and better preserved myth. Sir G. W. Cox has often thrown some very bright light on a dark cluster of Aryan mythology by this method, and in several cases what he has achieved has served as a preparation for making us see the true genealogy of mythological names.

Myths agreeing in one and differing in other Names.

There is one class of legends which has not yet received all the attention which it deserves, and which supplies a very strong argument in favour of the Analogical School; I mean those in which one name is the same, while the other names are different.

Helena, for instance, is not only the cause of the Trojan war, after having been carried off by Paris,

but she is likewise the cause of another great war which the *Dioskuroi* waged against Athens, after Helena had been carried off by Theseus. Theseus had either himself carried off Helena from Sparta, or had asked his mother Æthra to keep her safe in Aphidnae for Idas and Lynkeus, the sons of Aphareus, who had got possession of her. Her brothers, the Dioskuroi, attacked Athens at the time when *Menestheus* was trying to make himself ruler of Athens during the absence of Theseus. *Akademos* betrayed the secret that Helena was kept at Aphidnae, the Dioskuroi took it, rescued Helena, and carried off Æthra, the mother of Theseus.

Here we see that the myth of Helena is the same, only that she is carried, not to Troy, but to Athens, and that she causes the destruction, not of Troy, but of Aphidnae. Her safe conveyance to Ægypt or to Leuke, under the escort of Hermes, represents a third journey of the same famous heroine [1].

Again, the capture of Troy is not ascribed to Achilles only. We read in the Iliad itself how in former times Herakles [2] had besieged and destroyed the city of Laomedon. When Laomedon, after promising to Herakles, as a reward for the deliverance of Hesione, the horses which he had received from Zeus, declined to fulfil his promise, Herakles with six vessels and a large number of companions besieged Ilion and destroyed it.

Services similar to those which Poseidon and Apollon had to render to Laomedon, and for which Laomedon declined to pay them their stipulated wages,

[1] See F. De Duhn, *De Menelai Itinere Ægyptiaco*. Bonnae, 1874.
[2] Il. V. 638; XIV. 250; XV. 25; XX. 144.

were performed by Apollon to Admetos, by Herakles to Eurystheus, by Perseus, Theseus and other heroes, many of them no doubt of solar origin [1].

If then we see that one name in a myth may change, we can understand that two or three names may, that, in fact, the same typical myth may be told of a number of mythical persons, nay, may in the end be ascribed to purely historical characters. This, however, is very different from supposing that any of these stories were originally told of Somebody, and afterwards attached to this or that person. 'No name, no myth' is what all mythology teaches us, but it also teaches that as in modern so in ancient times, the same stories are often told of very different persons.

In Finland, where the collection of popular ballads and their arrangement as a complete epic poem has taken place within the memory of man, we know as a matter of fact that stories told originally of one hero were afterwards told of another. Lönnrot, who collected these ballads from the people themselves and published them under the name of *Kalevala*, tells us that *Leminkainen* was substituted for *Kauko*, who was the original hero in the second expedition to Pohjola (Songs 26–29), and that when one hero has become very popular in one locality, marvellous exploits performed by others are told as if performed by him [2].

And what applies to the myths of one people, applies also to the myths of a whole family. It is possible

[1] Powell, *Mythology of North-American Indians*, p. 24; Report of Bureau of Ethnology, 1881.

[2] See *Athenaeum*, Oct. 20, 1888.

that a myth told of Indra in the Veda, may be told of Apollon in the Iliad and Odyssey, because there was a time, before the Aryan nations separated, when the original both of the Vedic and the Greek myth may have been told of a person neither Indra nor Apollon, though drawing his origin from the same source. In that case we have a right to speak of analogies between Indra and Apollon, but we shall have to admit, at the same time, an independent element in both, the concept namely which is embodied in their names, before these names could become the stems on which some older myths were grafted.

I must confess that I often feel giddy when others mount up step by step to greater and greater heights, and survey a larger and larger tract of country than I can span with my eyes. It may be the same in surveying the wide field of mythological ruins. *Diversos diversa juvant,* and there is plenty of work for all of us.

Varuna and Ormazd.

In order to exhibit the difference between the etymological and the analogical methods of Comparative Mythology quite clearly, I shall examine more in detail the supposed relationship between the Vedic God Varuna (Greek *Ouranos*) and Ormazd, the supreme god of the Avesta.

What do we really mean, if we say with M. Darmesteter and other Zend scholars, that Varuna is the same as Ormazd? We must not forget what I had to point out again and again, namely that Varuna and Ormazd are names—I never say, *mere* names—but that they were names, and that there never was

an individual who by the Vedic *Ri*shis was called Varu*n*a, and by Zoroaster Ormazd. Varu*n*a meant the sky, and was one of the many names by which the Aryans of India called the Unknown or the Infinite as manifested in the vault of the sky. Ormazd, on the contrary, the Zend Ahura Mazda, means the Wise Lord[1], and was from the beginning a more abstract concept, giving but little indication of those marked physical characteristics which distinguish the earliest names of other Aryan deities.

It is perfectly true that Varu*n*a in many of the hymns addressed to him stands before us quite divested of his physical nature, as a supreme all-wise and all-powerful deity, and that many of these attributes of divine supremacy belonged to him in common with Ormazd.

But are we to suppose that Zoroaster changed the name of Varu*n*a into that of Ormazd, and that his followers, after having formerly invoked Varu*n*a, determined to invoke their old god in future by the new and more spiritual name of the 'Wise Lord'? If that is done, as it often is in the case of religious revolutions, or in the case of conversions, should we say that Jehovah, for instance, was the same god as Jupiter, because the same people who formerly called their highest god Jupiter, called him afterwards Jehovah? I think not. Both gods, no doubt, would receive from their worshippers the highest attributes of divinity, but when we speak of the two gods as historical products of the human mind, we should never say that the Semitic *Jehovah* was the same as the Aryan *Jupiter*.

[1] Darmesteter, *Ormazd et Ahriman*, p. 29.

Suppose, however, that a Roman, brought up to believe in Jupiter as his supreme god, had later in life settled in Greece and adopted the worship of Zeus; in that case, whether he himself knew the original identity of Zeus and Jupiter or not, we should be justified in saying that his new god Zeus was the same as the god of his infancy, Jupiter. It is quite possible that a Roman might be shocked at the thought that his Jupiter Optimus Maximus should be believed to be the same person as the popular and somewhat immoral Greek Zeus; yet however different in character the two synonymous gods might be, they can be treated by us, with the knowledge which we possess, as originally the same.

These questions must be reasoned out carefully, otherwise we shall never understand each other. In one sense M. Darmesteter is no doubt justified in saying that the Vedic Varu*n*a is the Avestic Ormazd. They both represent the highest conception of supreme deity, reached respectively by India and Persia. They betray also the earlier stages of religious thought traversed by their worshippers, by some of the attributes which the poets of the Veda and the poets of the Avesta assign to them. In that sense therefore they are the same. But in the same sense Jehovah also might be said to be the same god as Varu*n*a and Ormazd, nay, all supreme gods may be said to be the same.

When we speak of Varu*n*a, we can mean no more than what is expressly comprehended under this name by Vedic poets; and when we speak of Ormazd, we can mean no more than what is expressly comprehended under that name by Zoroaster and his

followers. And if we do that, we shall have to admit that the name Varu*n*a, which forms the centre of a large cluster of religious and mythological thought, was different from the very beginning from the names of Ormazd and Jehovah, which were formed out of totally independent religious and mythological thought in Persia and in Judæa.

After we have come to this understanding, nothing can be more interesting and instructive than to compare Varu*n*a and Ormazd, just as we might compare Kar*n*a and Cyrus, Vasish*th*a and Zoroaster.

Varu*n*a shows his physical origin (l. c., p. 52) by his name, which, like the Greek Οὐρανός, means the vault of heaven. The sun is called his eye, the waters his wives, the lightning his son (apâm napât).

Ormazd (l. c., p. 30), though his name is purely spiritual, shows traces of earlier and more material conceptions in being likewise represented as having the sky for his vestment, the sun for his eye, the waters (âpô) for his wives, and the lightning (apâm napât) for his son.

Varu*n*a is likewise represented as the maker[1] and supreme ruler of the world, as the lord of *Rita* or law, as omniscient, as a supreme king of heaven and earth. He is called *Asura*, the living god.

And Ormazd also is addressed as the maker and supreme ruler of the world, as the lord of Asha or law, as revealed to Zoroaster, as omniscient (mazdâo), as the supreme King of heaven and earth. He is called *Ahura*, the lord.

[1] This, though doubted, is clearly implied in passages like IV. 42, 3, 'Like a clever carpenter I have fashioned all things, and supported heaven and earth.'

Other points of similarity between Varuṇa and Ormazd have been collected by M. Darmesteter in his learned essay on Ormazd and Ahriman. Ormazd, for instance, is the first of a class of deities called *Ameshaspeñta*, i. e. Immortal benefactors. Their number at first is uncertain, but was afterwards fixed at seven, still later at thirty-three. Varuṇa is the first of a class of deities called Âdityas, the sons of Aditi,—the Infinite, whose number, uncertain at first, is fixed afterwards at seven or eight[1], while the number of all the deities of the Veda is frequently given as thirty-three.

Varuṇa in the Veda is generally associated with Mitra, the two, if thus united, representing darkness and light, night and day, heaven and earth, while formerly Varuṇa alone embraced everything, the three heavens and the three earths[2]. Ormazd, too, in the Avesta is associated with Mithra, but he had already become so supreme that no other god could be called his match; and Mithra, not even counted as one of the Amesha-speñtas, had to become one of his sons. Yet traces remain to show that this was not always so. Mithra-Ahura (l. c., p. 65) occurs in the Avesta as a divine dvandva, just like the Vedic Mitrâ-Varuṇau, and the sun is actually called the eye of Ahura Mazda and Mithra[3].

Though we might match many of these attributes, both physical and metaphysical, with passages in the

[1] See M. M., Rig-veda Saṁhitâ, translated, pp. 223-51.

[2] Rv. VI. 67, 5; VII. 87, 2.

[3] On the great differences between the Vedic Mitra and the Zoroastrian Mithra, see Muir, *Sanskrit Texts*, v. p. 71; Geiger, *Civilisation of Eastern Iranians*, p. xxxiii; on their original identity, see Windischmann, *Mithra, ein Beitrag zur Mythengeschichte des Orients*, 1857.

Psalms, there is this great difference between Varuna and Ormazd on one side and Jehovah on the other, that the former share certain names in common, such as *Asura* and *Ahura*, and are surrounded by synonymous characters, such as *Âpah* and *Âpô*, the Waters, apâm napât and apâm napât, the Lightning, while Jehovah lives in a language peculiarly his own.

It will now be clear what is meant by calling the relationship between Varuna, Ormazd, and Jehovah, *psychological*, that between Varuna and Ormazd *analogical*, while the relationship between Dyaus and Zeus, between the Sanskrit apâm napât and the Zend apâm napât is etymological, that is, genealogical and perfect—is in fact not relationship, but real original identity.

The analogical school would not only identify the Vedic Varuna with the Ormazd of the Avesta, but likewise with the Greek Zeus. While the etymological school identifies Zeus with the Vedic Dyaus, and tries to explain the later modifications which the one underwent in India, the other in Greece, the analogical school would boldly identify Zeus, not with Dyaus, but with the Vedic Varuna, who is, like Zeus, the creator and ruler of the world, omniscient and omnipotent (Darmesteter, l. c., p. 78). But what becomes in that case of all the legends told of Zeus, not one of which would agree with the spiritual and highly moral character of Varuna? The very foundations of Comparative Mythology would be shaken, if we followed this principle. Zeus, having become in Greece the supreme deity, would naturally share many attributes which in the Veda belong to Varuna. But as little as Indra is the same as Varuna in the Veda, though

he too becomes supreme in many Vedic hymns, and is actually introduced as disputing the supremacy of Varuṇa, can Zeus be said to have been originally the same as Varuṇa and Ahura Mazda.

The same scholar who thus attempts to identify Varuṇa and Zeus, does not shrink from identifying the Vedic Dyaus with the Greek Ouranos. Where would this lead to? By all means let us study how Dyaus and Zeus, Varuṇa and Ouranos, starting from common centres, did arrive at such widely distant points that the Vedic Dyaus should on some points resemble the Greek Ouranos, while the Vedic Varuṇa resembles the Greek Zeus. That is a study worthy of a true historian and a true psychologist.

However wide apart *Dyaus* and *Zeus* and *Jupiter* may be—and on some points they are almost diametrically opposed to each other—we know as a matter of historical certainty that one unbroken thread holds them together, and that, if only we follow that thread far enough, it will lead us on to the true vital germ, namely the original name, out of which the whole entangled growth of Jovian mythology arose. It might have been said with perfect truth by an orthodox Roman that the Homeric Zeus was not his Jupiter, and yet neither his native Jupiter nor the foreign Zeus could have been fully understood, unless they were traced back to a common origin. Nor does it make any difference to us, if we are told that the Roman Jupiter and the Greek Zeus must have been the same god, because the Roman youth believed them to be so. If that faith had been founded on true etymological studies, the case would be different. But that was impossible in the time of

Cato and Varro. The mere teaching of Greek schoolmasters and philosophers that their Greek gods were the same as the Roman gods was wrong, even where it was right. It was accidentally right in the case of Zeus and Jupiter, it was accidentally wrong in the case of Demeter and Ceres, Poseidon and Neptunus. The same process of mythological and religious compromise may be watched at present among the Himalayan hill tribes. 'On more than one occasion,' as Mr. Oldham writes (*Contemp. Rev.*, March, 1885), 'I have heard wandering religious devotees assure the people of a village that their Deota (godhead) was identical with Śiva or some other orthodox divinity. The rustics are flattered to find their god is so famous, and are persuaded without much difficulty to adopt the new title.' Of course, if there is a similarity in name or in character between the two deities, the process of amalgamation becomes all the easier.

But to say that because Ouranos embraces the Earth, therefore he is not Varu*n*a, but Dyaush-pitâ, the husband of P*r*ithivî mâta, would be a kind of reasoning[1] which would identify the planet *Budha* (Mercury) with *Buddha*, the prophet, because both have nearly the same name. *Si duo faciunt idem, non sunt iidem*, ought to be a fundamental principle of comparative mythology, whether etymological, historical, or psychological, while, if we only go back far enough, the fundamental principle of our science will never mislead us, viz. *idem nomen, idem numen.*

[1] I see that M. Darmesteter himself, in his *Notes Additionelles*, has modified this statement. 'Cette répartition,' he says, 'n'a pas cependant été absolue.'

III. Psychological School. (Völker-Psychologie.)

We now have to consider a third school of Comparative Mythologists, which declares itself entirely independent both of etymology and analogy, and which nevertheless seems to me to have rendered most excellent service to the students of mythology. The followers of that school do not confine themselves to the study of the mythology of one linguistic family only, whether Aryan, Semitic, African, Australian, American, etc., but they consider the mythological stage as a necessary phase in the psychological growth of man in every part of the world, and therefore look for analogies, not only where the common origin of nations and languages possessing certain myths in common has been proved, but where no such relationship seems possible. This study has been cultivated with great success during the last fifty years, and is generally known on the Continent as a branch of *Völker-psychologie*. I have often been blamed, both for having been too enthusiastic an advocate and for having been too critical a judge of this new branch of mythological research, but I can plead Not Guilty to both these charges.

Advantages in England: India, Colonies, Missionary Societies.

Living in England, I naturally tried to avail myself of the splendid opportunities which this country offers for linguistic and ethnological studies. India, to me the most interesting of all countries in the world, is now divided from England by a three weeks' journey only, and through a number of eminent Englishmen who spend their lives in India, and a number of promising young men whom India sends to be educated

in England, there is now so close an intercourse between the East and the West, that at Oxford, for instance, it is almost as easy to study the language, manners, and customs of the Veddahs as of the Gaels.

Besides India, there are the Colonies, and there is, or, at all events, there ought to be, no difficulty in obtaining through the Colonial Office any information that could be of use for the study of civilised or uncivilised tribes from Canada to New Guinea.

Lastly, there is the wonderful net which Missionary enterprise has spread from England over the whole world, and which might so usefully be employed, not only for its own most excellent purpose, but likewise for gathering valuable information for the proper study of mankind.

Though I have often had to complain of the small encouragement which ethnological researches receive in England, where they ought to flourish and abound, I feel bound to express my sincere gratitude for the kindness and the intelligent interest with which the Directors of the old East-India Company, and the authorities at the India Office, the Colonial Office, and the Missionary Societies have listened to my constant and sometimes, no doubt, somewhat impatient appeals.

In India much has been done, not only for the study of its ancient classical literature and the exploration of its antiquities, but likewise for studying the numerous living dialects, collecting legends, registering customs, studying religions and superstitions. The publication of the Rig-veda, the oldest book of the Aryan race, in six quarto volumes, and the series of translations of the *Sacred Books of the East*,

entrusted to my editorship, bear sufficient witness that my appeals for help have not always been in vain.

If I have been less successful in stimulating ethnological research in the Colonies, it has not been altogether my fault. At one time I thought indeed that the first step at least had been made. During Lord Granville's tenure of office an official invitation was sent to all the Colonies, requesting all who took an interest in the history of native races, to collect their languages, to note down their religious practices, their customs and laws, to describe their antiquities, their idols, their weapons and tools, and to send accounts to the Colonial Office in London. The invitation was well responded to, and my hope was that these papers, after careful examination, might have been published from time to time as 'Ethnological Records of the English Colonies.' But alas, a new king arose which knew not Joseph. The papers were either allowed to accumulate in forgotten pigeon-holes, or were handed over to some learned societies, and under the cold water that was persistently poured upon it, the scheme that had been started with every prospect of success was finally extinguished. Languages which have lived for thousands of years are now allowed to die out without being recorded; laws dating from the first beginnings of social organisation are forgotten; religious customs which might have thrown light on many a dark page in the history of other religions, become extinct before our eyes, because the official correspondence became troublesome to the permanent staff of the Colonial Office, and because the expenditure of a few thousand pounds was considered too extravagant for preserving the historical records of

the English Colonies. Some good, however, has come of this agitation, though it was less than what was hoped for. In several of the Colonies local grants have been made for archaeological and linguistic research, and at the Cape a professorship has actually been founded for South African Philology, which, in connection with the important linguistic library, given by Sir George Grey, will make Cape Town, I hope, a permanent home of African studies [1].

Work done in America.

Most excellent work is now being done in America also. There had been in the United States too some remissness, and some failures and waste of money. But when at last it was perceived that the preservation of whatever can still be known about the aboriginal tribes of America forms a kind of national duty, the funds were soon forthcoming, and the best scholars were found to carry out this work most thoroughly. By Act of Congress of March 3, 1879, the United States Geological Survey was established, and a Bureau of Ethnology was started under the direction of the Smithsonian Institution, with an excellent Director, Mr. J. W. Powell, and an efficient staff of able assistants. The work was divided into four departments,—arts, institutions, languages, and opinions. But, as Mr. Powell remarks in his Report, 'these four departments must work together and throw light on each other. The study of arts is but the collection of curiosities, unless the relations between arts, institutions, and language are discovered. The study of institutions leads but to the discovery

[1] *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 275.

of curious habits and customs, unless the deeper meaning thereof is discovered from arts, languages, and opinions. The study of language is but the study of words, unless philological research is based upon a knowledge of arts, institutions, and opinions. And the study of opinions is but the collection of mythic stories, if their true meaning is not ascertained in the history of arts, institutions, and languages.'

In 1877 appeared the 'Introduction to the Study of Indian Languages,' with words, phrases, and sentences to be collected, by J. W. Powell; second edition 1880.

The first Report of the Bureau of Ethnology 1879 to 1880, published in 1881, contained exceedingly valuable contributions from the Director, Mr. Powell, and from several of his fellow-workers [1].

Volunteers came forward from many parts to help in this noble work, as soon as it became known that their contributions would be published with due credit, and that objects of savage and barbaric art might be safely deposited in a National Museum.

In 1881 appeared the important and comprehensive work of Hon. Lewis H. Morgan on 'Houses and House-Life of the American Aborigines' (Vol. IV. of Contributions to American Ethnology), containing

[1] The most important papers were :—Dr. H. C. Yarrow, 'Contribution to the study of the Mortuary Customs of the North American Indians,' a continuation of a former paper, called 'Introduction to the study of Mortuary Customs'; E. S. Holden, 'Studies in Central American Picture Writing'; Colonel Garrick Mallery, 'Sign-Language among North American Indians.' There is also at the end of the volume a useful catalogue of linguistic MSS. in the library of the Bureau of Ethnology, by Mr. James Pilling, the same scholar who is preparing a complete Bibliography of North American Philology, containing a chronological list of all works written in or upon any of the languages of North America.

most careful observations on two great periods in the growth of early society of which we know next to nothing in other parts of the world. Mr. Morgan's great work, 'Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity,' had appeared in 1871, published by the Smithsonian Institution, and had laid a solid foundation for a new branch of ethnological study. But this new essay deserves equal attention. It treats of two periods, the Older and the Middle period of barbarism, the former represented by the Iroquois and similar tribes in the North, the latter by the Aztecs of Mexico and the Indians of Yucatan and Central America. Mr. Morgan tries to show that during those periods, the family being too weak a unit to face the struggle of life, it was thought prudent and necessary to form combinations of families, living together in large houses, and that this led to a curious social and governmental organization, to a certain communion in living, and respect for hospitality, and peculiar kinds of kinship, all of extreme interest to the student of ethnology. Mr. Morgan's death is a severe loss to ethnological science, and we ought not to forget that, as Mr. Brinton remarks ('American Languages,' 1885, p. 6), the life-work of that eminent antiquary was based entirely on linguistics.

Linguistic studies occupy the foremost place in the work now being carried on under the auspices of the Bureau of Ethnology [1], because, as Mr. Powell truly

[1] The following grammars, we are informed, are in preparation, and will soon be published:—*The Cegiha Language*, by the Rev. J. Owen Dorsey; *The Klamath Language*, by A. S. Gatschet; *The Dakota Language*, by the Rev. S. R. Briggs. These will be followed by a Grammar of several of the Iroquois Dialects, by Mrs. Erminnie A. Smith, and by a Grammar of the Chata Language, by Prof. Otis T. Mason.

remarks, 'Without a fundamental knowledge of those languages which can still be successfully studied, all other anthropologic peculiarities of the tribes speaking them will be imperfectly understood.'

The second Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology for 1880–1881, published at Washington in 1883, contains, besides Mr. Powell's report, the following papers: Frank H. Cushing, 'Zuñi Fetiches'; Mrs. Erminnie A. Smith, 'Myths of the Iroquois'; Henry W. Henshaw, 'Animal Carvings from the Mounds of Mississippi Valley'; Dr. Washington Matthews, 'Navajo Silversmiths'; W. H. Holmes, 'Art in Shell of the Ancient Americans'; James Stevenson, 'Illustrated Catalogue of the Collections obtained from the Indians of New Mexico and Arizona in 1879 and 1880.'

I have since received two more volumes, each full of valuable information. The Report for 1881 to 1882, published in 1884, contains, among other papers, one by Mr. Cyrus Thomas, 'On certain Maya and Mexican Manuscripts,' another by Mr. J. Owen Dorsey, 'On Omaha Sociology,' and another by Dr. Washington Matthews, 'On Navajo Weavers.' The Report for 1882–1883, published in 1886, gives us an essay by Mr. Garrick Mallery, 'On Pictographs of the North-American Indians,' and several papers on ceramic art by Mr. W. H. Holmes and Mr. Frank Hamilton Cushing.

Works of this kind are of the greatest importance for the study of anthropology, and particularly for that branch of it which we call mythology. I know that in trying to encourage the study of the languages, the customs, and the religions of uncivilised

races, we may sometimes incur the suspicion of unduly exaggerating the importance of the results likely to be obtained from such researches; nor can it be denied that researches of this kind may often lead only to an accumulation of curious facts which, unless they can be interpreted by themselves or used to interpret other facts, are considered by the public at large as mere rubbish. If properly sifted and classified, however, such rubbish has yielded already the most valuable grains of gold, and those who doubt it have only to read that one truly classical work, *Anthropologie der Naturvölker* by Waitz, in order to see how much may be learnt from what that great scholar rightly calls, not 'Savages,' but 'the People of Nature.'

The True Meaning of Manito.

The mythology and religion of these People of Nature require, however, the same critical treatment which is demanded for the study of Greek and Roman Mythology. There is a difference between being pedantic and being honest. It is pedantic to exact from a writer on North American religions the same familiarity with the languages of the Mohawks which Gottfried Hermann possessed with Greek, or the same critical accuracy in their treatment of the religion and philosophy of these nomadic races which Munro brought to the study of Lucretius. Nor should we forget that a critical study of languages and religions has been making such rapid progress of late and has assumed such large proportions, that a writer on anthropology is not at once to be set down as ignorant or dishonest, because he writes in ignorance of the most recent essay published, it may be, in

the Transactions of some local society. What is dishonest, or, at all events, unscholarlike, is to write dogmatically on any subject of which we have not made a special study, and at the same time wilfully to ignore or even to ridicule the work which specialists have devoted to it.

It is not fair, for instance, to blame writers on anthropology if they have hitherto ascribed to the North-American Indians, as is generally done, a kind of primitive monotheism. The 'Great Manito[1]' has been so often represented by men who had long been living among the Red-Indians as the Supreme Spirit, in all but his name identified with Jehovah, that it required some courage to question this view. Some of the earliest missionaries, such as Roger Williams, had pointed out that *Manito* was rather a pantheistic than a monotheistic concept, and Lahontaine had remarked long ago that it was applied to all that surpasses their understanding and proceeds from a cause that they cannot trace[2]. It was reserved, however, to those scholars who of late have studied the languages of America with the same analytical acumen which has given us our grammars of Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin, to bring out clearly the original intention of the Great Manito. *Manito*, they tell us, means simply the

[1] I see it stated by Mr. E. Farrer (*Mail*, Toronto) that *Kitchi-Manito*, which is generally translated by 'the Great Spirit,' is a mere mistake, and that the true form is *Gitse-Manito*, which means 'the Spirit of the Day.' *Gijig* is the day, the light, the shining. Hence *gigieb*, the morning. The root is *giji*, to warm, to heat, to cook, to ripen, and from it *gitsis* or *kezis*, the sun, as well as *gitse*, the day. The moon is called *tibi-gitsis*, the night-sun, or the night-shine, and *gitsiis* is the month. How many analogies are here supplied with Sanskrit words!

[2] M. M., *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 195.

Beyond [1], and was in fact one of the many names which we find among nations where we should least expect it, as the first vague expression of the Infinite [2]. Scholarship only could have established this fact, and while not blaming anthropologists for not having discovered what was really outside their domain, one may at the same time remind them that they ought to appreciate more highly the services which scholarship, and scholarship alone, can render to their studies.

It is curious to observe in how many different ways this word *Manito* has been translated, as spirit, demon, god, devil, mystery, magic, and even medicine [3]. The etymological or original meaning of *Manito*, as explained by Trumbull, has been discussed in my 'Lectures on the Science of Religion,' p. 193. Another word for *Manito* in Algonkin is *oki*, in Iroquois *oki* and *otkon*, in Dakota *wakan*, in Aztec *teotl*, in Quichua *huaca*, and in Maya *ku*. They all express, as Brinton says, the idea of the supernatural in its most general form, as that which is *above* the natural. *Wakan* as an adverb means *above*, *oki* is the same as *oghee*, and *otkon* seems allied to *hetken*, all having the same signification. Whether all these words have a common origin must as yet remain doubtful, but it deserves at least to be pointed out, how closely they resemble each other, *ku* in Maya, *kue-ya* in Natchez, *kauhwu* in the Uchee of West Florida, *okha* in Otomi, *okee* in Mandan, *ogha*, *waughon*, *wakan* in Sioux, *waka* and *huaca* in Quichua, *quaker* [4] and *oki* in Iroquois, *oki* in Algonkin,

[1] M. M., l.c., p. 196.

[2] M. M., *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 55, Mana, a Melanesian name for the Infinite.

[3] Brinton, *Myths of the New World*, p. 45.

[4] Gallatin (*Transactions of the American Antiquarian Society*, vol. ii.) is

vaghalt in Eskimo, being all intended to express that which is above, the sky, and what is above the sky. The Indians themselves find it difficult to explain what they mean by this word. The Hurons, from whom possibly the Iroquois borrowed the word, declared that they meant by it a demoniac power 'that rules the seasons of the year, that holds the winds and the waves in leash, that can give fortune to their undertakings, and relieve all their wants.' The Aztecs and Quiches attempted to express more fully what they mean, by using at the same time such phrases as 'Head of the Sky,' 'Lord of the Sky,' 'Prince of the Azure Planisphere,' 'the Above All,' 'the Soul of the Sky.'

It was through the Missionaries, however, that *Manito* and the other names for the Beyond were for the first time taken as names of the Good Spirit, in the Christian sense of the word; and it is stated positively in the 'Jesuit Relations' that there was no one immaterial god, recognised by the Algonkin tribes, when first brought into contact with Europeans, and that the title, the Great Manito, was introduced first by themselves in its personal sense[1], while the name of the Supreme Iroquois deity, triumphantly adduced by many writers to show the monotheism underlying the native creeds, viz. *Neo* or *Hawaneu*, is strongly suspected of being nothing but an Indian corruption of the French *Dieu* and *le bon Dieu*[2].

led to suppose that the Eastern tribes derived their first notions of a Supreme Being from the Quakers; Brinton, p. 48, note.

[1] *Relations de la Nouvelle France, pour l'an* 1637, p. 49; Brinton, l.c., p. 53.

[2] *Études Philologiques sur quelques langues sauvages de l'Amerique*, p. 14, Montreal, 1866; Brinton, l.c., p. 53. Mr. Garrick Mallery, in his paper on the Pictographs of the North-American Indians (*Report of Bureau of Ethnology*, 1882-83, p. 191), says: 'The statement that the

Every kind of excuse, I know quite well, has been used in order to escape from the drudgery of philological study. Its results have been called uncertain and changing, and no grapes have ever been called so sour as those that produce the intoxicating wine of Comparative Philology. The most honest excuse has always been one in which I can fully sympathize, that life is too short to learn the grammars even of the seventy-five languages of North America only. No doubt it is, but it is not too short to teach us a certain amount of circumspection, before we declare, like Mr. Herbert Spencer, that the North American languages are still in such a state that they cannot be spoken in the dark, or before we pronounce an opinion that they cannot possibly possess a name for the Infinite.

I know of course that when I have from time to time availed myself of the traditions of non-civilised races in elucidation of Greek, Roman, and Vedic mythology, I have laid myself open to the same criticism which I have so freely addressed to others. The subject seemed to me so important that I was willing to incur a certain risk while trying to attract the attention of others to the valuable results likely to be obtained from it, and while encouraging younger scholars to study such languages as Hottentot or Mohawk, in the same spirit in which they had studied Greek and Latin. I myself had but little time to bestow on the study of these non-literary languages.

Indians worshipped one "Great Spirit" or single overruling personal god is erroneous. That philosophical conception is beyond the stage of culture reached by them, and was not found in any tribe previous to missionary influence. Their actual philosophy can be expressed far more objectively and therefore pictorially. But see also Shea, *Dict. Français Onontagué*, preface.

yet I may say this in self-defence that, whenever I have ventured to write about the religious, mythological, and moral ideas of uncivilised races and the light which they throw on dark chapters of Aryan or Semitic religion, mythology, or ethics, I have always tried to gain beforehand a certain insight into their language or to claim the assistance of competent scholars, in order to keep myself from going entirely wrong, though painfully aware all the time of the thinness of the ice on which I ventured.

Before I wrote on the mythology of North-American Indians, I had availed myself of the opportunity of learning the elements of the Mohawk language from my young friend, M. Oronyhateka, when an undergraduate at Oxford. I wrote down at the time the outlines of a Mohawk grammar, which perhaps may still be published some day [1].

It was my friendship with the late Bishop Patteson of Melanesia which led me to take an interest in Melanesian and Polynesian grammar. He sent me lists of words and grammatical outlines which threw strange rays of light on the thoughts of these primitive islanders. After his death I enjoyed the great benefit of being able to go through the intricacies of Polynesian mythology with Mr. W. W. Gill, who, as a missionary, has acquired a complete mastery of some of the Polynesian dialects. At a still later time I could avail myself of the explanations which the Rev. R. H. Codrington, one of the highest authorities in

[1] Cf. *The Literary Faculty of the Native Races of America*, by John Reade, Trans. Roy. Soc. Canada, Sect. II. 1884, p. 17; *The Huron-Iroquois of Canada*, by Daniel Wilson, Trans. Roy. Soc. Canada, Sect. II. 1884, p. 87.

this branch of philology, was good enough to give me as to the mental capacities of these interesting races. It was only after receiving such valuable help that in my Preface to 'Myths and Songs from the South Pacific,' by the Rev. William Wyatt Gill, 1876[1], I ventured to call attention to the lessons which Comparative Mythologists might learn, even in the small island of Mangaia, and to the curious coincidences between Polynesian and classical myths and customs.

It may, no doubt, seem bold to classical scholars to endeavour to make the myths of Greek poets and the theories of Greek philosophers as to the marriage between Heaven and Earth more intelligible by a reference to the crude traditions of the New Zealanders[2], still more to trace the *sensus numinis* and the first apprehensions of the Infinite to the *Mana* of the Melanesians. Still, under proper safeguards, and more particularly with the advice of the best authorities accessible at present, such boldness may be forgiven, and may possibly encourage others who are better qualified than I am to prosecute researches, which have already yielded some fruit.

As to the African languages, they were brought near to me many years ago through my personal intercourse with the late Dr. Bleek, and afterwards with his gifted successor, Dr. Hahn. But again I should have hesitated to avail myself of the rich materials which the folk-lore of African races supplies to the student of mythology, had I not been able to confer personally with such scholars as Dr. Callaway and Dr. Hahn on every point on which I wished to speak

[1] *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 248.
[2] *India, what can it teach us?* pp. 150–56; *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 55.

as elucidating dark corners in the mythology of India and Greece. It was under such guidance that I felt encouraged to write what I have written on South African mythology, on the metaphorical meaning of Uthlanga [1], on the Mythology among the Hottentots [2], and on the Languages of Africa in general [3].

We have thus examined the three schools of Comparative Mythology, the *Etymological*, the *Analogical*, and the purely *Psychological*, and we have seen what kind of work has been done, and may still be done, by each of them. It may possibly be asked why mythology should deserve so laborious a study. In former times mythology was studied chiefly to enable the classical scholar to understand the frequent allusions to gods and goddesses, to heroes and heroines which occur in Greek and Latin authors. It was also considered a part of general education, so far as it enabled ladies and gentlemen to recognise the character and meaning of ancient statues in our museums, and the right pronunciation of the names of classical gods and heroes, so often introduced into their writings by modern poets. But that mythology should possess an interest of its own, that it should mark an important period in the history of language and thought, and therefore in the history of the human race, was never thought of.

So long as we knew of Greek and Roman mythology only, this was intelligible. The Greeks and Romans were always looked upon as exceptional people, and it was ascribed to their peculiar poetical genius that they should have invented so strange a collection of fancies and horrors as their mythology.

[1] *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, 1882, p. 40.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 273. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 236.

But when it was found that almost every nation, whether civilised or uncivilised, possessed something like mythology, and that these various mythologies presented the most startling coincidences, philosophers could not help admitting that there must be something in human nature that by necessity led to mythology, nay, that there must be some reason in all the unreason that goes by the name of myth.

That something was discovered to be language, in its natural progress from roots to words; in its being forced to use roots expressive of human activities in naming the most striking phenomena of the objective world, and, in many cases, in its forgetfulness of the original purport of such names. Mythology, which at first seemed like a kind of madness that had come over the human race at a certain period of its development, has now been recognised as an inevitable phase in the growth of language and thought, for the two are always inseparable. It represents what in geology we should call a *metamorphic* stratum, a convulsion of rational, intelligible, and duly stratified language produced by volcanic eruptions of underlying rocks. It is metamorphic language and thought, and it is the duty of the geologist of language to try to discover in the widely scattered fragments of that mythological stratum the remains of organic life, of rational thought, and of the earliest religious aspirations.

LECTURE XIX.

ON CUSTOMS AND LAWS

Materials for the Study of Customs and Laws.

THE consideration of the materials for the study of Natural Religion which may be discovered in language and mythology, has occupied us for a long time. It would not have been enough simply to enumerate these materials. It was necessary at the same time to show how they have been obtained, and how they could and should be used. The ore in this case is not, as it were, to be found on the surface, but has first to be brought to light, and to be sifted and purified before it can be made to serve our own purposes.

It is different with Customs and Laws. Here there can be little doubt as to where the materials can be found or how they should be used. Many of the ancient laws and customs have been collected and have received a place among the Sacred Books. You will find rich materials in the translations of the 'Sacred Books of the East,' for instance, in the Brâhmaṇas (Nos. XII, XXVI), the Gṛihya-sûtras (Nos. XXIX, XXX), the Sacred Laws of the Âryas (Nos. II, XIV, XXV), for Hinduism; in the Vinaya texts (Nos. XIII, XVII, XX) for Buddhism; in the Avesta (Nos. IV, XXIII, XXXI) for Zoroastrianism; and in several of the books of Confucius for China In other countries we must depend either on ancient

codes of law, or on the descriptions found in the works of travellers, explorers, and missionaries.

Still, it must not be supposed that the study of manners and customs and laws is without its difficulties, a mere amusement for casual readers and compilers. It is difficult for travellers to observe and describe customs and laws correctly; it is still more difficult for the student to discover their real origin and their true purport.

Customs based on Religious Ideas.

Even if we confine our study to customs and laws which bear a religious character, we shall find it by no means easy to distinguish between those which are based on religious ideas and those which have served as a basis for religious ideas.

The custom of prayer, for instance, springs, no doubt, from a religious source, and the same may be said of simple libations and offerings to the gods which accompanied such prayers. Nothing is more natural than such a prayer at the rising and the setting of the sun, and a midday prayer also would soon find its legitimate place between the two. These three prayers we find in the Old Testament as well as in the Veda, and among many of the so-called savage races. But soon these three prayers, and any observances connected with them, begin to serve another purpose also, namely the division of the day and of the labours of the day, and this purpose may in time become so prominent in the eyes of the people as to obscure altogether the original meaning of the three daily prayers and libations (*Tri-sandhyâ*).

We have read a great deal lately about the Vedic prayers being later than the Vedic sacrifices. No

doubt, an ancient rite may have suggested a corresponding prayer, but an ancient prayer may likewise have suggested a corresponding rite. And in the nature of things a mute morning, noon, and evening rite is hardly conceivable, while a spontaneous prayer to the Dawn might surely have been composed without any reference as yet to any definite rite. To suppose, as Bergaigne did, that the hymns addressed to Agni, the Dawn, the Asvins, and the Sun at the prâtaranuvâka, the âsvina-sâstra, and similar collections of Vedic morning prayers, were all originally composed for liturgical purposes, is like supposing that all the psalms of the Old Testament were meant from the beginning for the morning and evening services of the Temple. Some of them may have been; our final collections of Vedic hymns and Hebrew psalms also may have been the result of a practical want. But why religious poetry alone should never have been spontaneous is difficult to understand, and the very character of some of the later psalms and of some of the later Vedic hymns shows that they were fashioned after more ancient originals. That religion has often become the mother of laws, and that in ancient times particularly many laws received their sanction from religion is a well-known fact. Themis was represented by Hesiod as the wife of Zeus, by Pindar as the πάρεδρος Διὸς ξενίου. Colotes declared that religion (ἡ περὶ θεῶν δόξα) was the first and most important thing in the constitution of laws [1].

In the Old Testament, also, the Ten Commandments are spoken by God, and the first four are of a purely religious character. They do not appeal to any but

[1] Plutarch, *adv. Colotem*, cap. 31.

a divine authority, and the punishments threatened for disobedience are likewise believed to come from God.

Customs generating Religious Ideas.

But it has been too often overlooked that in many cases customs, at first purely secular and serving a very definite practical purpose, have assumed a religious character at a later time, and have even given rise to entirely new religious ideas. What is called *totemism*, for instance, was at first a purely civil institution. The totem was meant as a sign of recognition and no more. During an early state of society such signs of recognition were absolutely necessary, and we find traces of them almost everywhere, either in the shape of banners, or emblems on shields, or peculiar kinds of dress and armour, or other symbolic signs. When, however, a so-called totem, chosen by a family or a tribe as a sign of recognition, became surrounded, as the colours of a regiment are even now, by a halo of many recollections, what was more natural than that, if the totem happened to be an animal, that animal should be looked upon as the guardian of a family or tribe, nay, in time, even as its ancestor. If people called themselves Bears, and had chosen the bear for their totem or their crest, why should they not look upon a bear as their ancestor? And, when they had once done so, is it so strange that they should have felt a certain reluctance to kill or to eat the bear, their ancestor, their protector, and possibly, their god? In this way a useful secular institution might become a religious custom, and lead on to religious ideas which could never have sprung up without it.

The same applies to ever so many domestic customs, which grew up in connection with marriages, births, initiation, name-giving, illness, and death, and which, particularly if their original purpose had been forgotten, assumed invariably a sacred character.

The observation of the changes of the moon, of the annual return of the sun, of the succession of the seasons, the months, the weeks, the days and hours, was one of the most fundamental conditions of a civilised life. Many of the mythological and religious ideas of antiquity are closely connected with what we should call the calendar. In ancient, and even in modern times, many of the greatest holy days and festivals betray a similar origin. But in all such cases we shall find it very difficult to say whether the establishment of the calendar led to mythological and religious ideas, or whether mythological and religious ideas proved helpful towards the establishment of a civil calendar. One thing only we must never forget, namely that customs and laws, however meaningless or even irrational they may appear, must all originally have had a meaning and a rational purpose.

Sollennia.

In early times usages grew up and were maintained simply because they were thought to be useful to a community, whether small or large. What was seen to be more or less useful to all, became a usage, and the mere fact that it was a usage, that it had been repeated again and again, and that it had existed for several generations, sufficed to give it in time a respected, venerable, and sacred character. What we call solemn, what the Romans called *sollennis*, was originally no more than what takes place every year (from

sollus, whole, and *annus*, year)[1]. All this is simply human nature.

It was only when with the progress of time some of these usages threatened to become abuses, and when single individuals or minorities declined to obey them, that the necessity arose for what we call laws, decisions carried by majorities or by force, and upheld by the threat of punishment to be inflicted by properly constituted authorities. The members of a community are seldom conscious of the object or the utility of their ancient usages, while legislation implies a clear conception of the necessity of a law. Hence it is chiefly for customs that a religious approval was afterwards required, while the laws, as such, were sufficiently protected by the sanction of the government and by the infliction of punishment.

Annual Festivals.

Surprise has often been expressed at the prominent place which the sun occupies in many of the religious and sacrificial customs of the world. Why should the sun, it has often been asked, have been of such consequence to the ancient inhabitants of the earth? People in our time think of the sun far away in the sky only; they forget that, as causing the regular succession of the seasons, the same sun was of truly vital importance to the early tillers of the soil, and that nothing was more natural than that they should have celebrated the yearly return of the sun and the seasons by social gatherings, festivals, processions, thank-offerings, and propitiatory sacrifices. To mention only a few of the ancient

[1] 'Sollenne, quod omnibus annis praestari debet,' Festus, p. 298; 'sollennia sacra dicuntur quae certis temporibus annisque fieri solent,' ibid., p. 344.

Vedic sacrifices, we find that the Agnihotra was performed twice every day; the Darsapûrnamâsa at every new and full moon; the Kâturmâsya every fourth month, at the beginning of spring, the rainy season and autumn; the Âgrâyaneshti at harvest-time; the Pasubandha at the beginning of the rains. Such ceremonial acts, if repeated year after year, at the same seasons, would soon prove extremely useful for purely chronometrical purposes also; they would supply the first outlines of a calendar, and that calendar might in time assume a purely civil, instead of a religious character. But in spite of all that, it would be wrong to say that priests devised these annual festivals with the definite purpose of establishing a civil calendar. Here also it is quite true that what is fit, or rather what is found to be sensible and rational, survives, but it does not follow that this fitness was foreseen, and that the reasonableness, though it was there, was always perceived.

Istar and Tammus.

A clear instance of how mere customs, or the natural festivities connected with the chief events of the year, could lead to the formation of a myth and even of a religious belief, is supplied by the well-known story of Istar and Tammuz, which spread from Babylon to Egypt, Cyprus, and Greece, and which found its last refuge in the story of Adonis and Aphrodite.

We know that among the Semitic as well as among the Aryan nations, the sun was an absorbing object of thought, whether in its daily or in its annual character. In Babylon, for instance, the sun was not only the chief deity, but also the favourite subject of that daily gossip which we have learnt to call folk-lore, or legend

and myth. One of the most widely spread of those legends was the story of the love between the sun and the earth. Under different names that story has been told all over the world. Men could not help telling it, as soon as they began to tell anything. So long as their chief interest centred in the annual produce of the soil, so long, in fact, as their very life depended on the happy union of the fertile earth and the warm embraces of the sun, their thoughts were solar. One of the inevitable chapters in that solar legend was the tragedy of winter, when the happy union between earth and sun seemed dissolved, when the sun no longer smiled on the earth, but grew weak and old, and at last forsook the earth altogether. Then the earth is represented as trying to recover the sun and the warmth and life that flows from it, as descending into the dark regions in order to bring him back or to restore him to new life, and thus to recover the treasures of which all nature was robbed during the winter. Poetical fancy has clothed that simple theme in ever so many disguises, the most ancient of which is perhaps the Babylonian poem which recounts the descent of the goddess *Istar* into the nether world in search of the healing waters, which should restore to life her bridegroom, *Tammuz*. This poem has often been translated, and the translations vary considerably. Considering the difficulties of such a translation, the uncertainty in the rendering of many passages is perfectly intelligible. I give here some extracts from the last translation which Professor Sayce has published in his *Hibbert Lectures* (p. 221):

'1. To the land whence none return, the region of (darkness),
Istar, the daughter of Sin (the moon), (inclined) her ear,

Yea, Istar herself, the daughter of Sin, inclined (her) ear
To the house of darkness, the seat of the god Irkalla,
To the house from whose entrance there is no exit.'

'12. Istar, on arriving at the gate of Hades,
To the keeper of the gate addressed the word:
Opener (keeper) of the waters, open thy gate!
Open thy gate that I may enter.
If thou openest not the gate that I may enter,
I will smite the door, the bolt will I shatter,
I will smite the threshold and pass through the portals.
I will raise up the dead to devour the living,
Above the living the dead shall exceed in number.
The keeper opened his mouth and speaks,
He says to the princess Istar:
Stay, O Lady, thou must not break it down!
Let me go and declare thy name to Nin-ki-gal, the queen of Hades.'

The keeper then informs Nin-ki-gal, who is also called Allat[1], of Istar's arrival, and of her wish to obtain the water for her bridegroom. But Allat is angry. She commands Istar to be stripped and to be led before her, when she curses her, limb by limb. Then, however, all sorts of misfortunes fell on the whole earth.

'75. After that the lady Istar into Hades had descended,
With the cow the bull would not unite, (the ass would not approach the female,)
The handmaid (in the street would not approach the freeman),
The freeman ceased (to give his order).'

Then the messenger of the gods informed the Sun-god of all the woe and destruction that had been wrought on earth through Istar's absence, and the Sun-god thereon consulted with Sin, his father, and with Ea, the king. And Ea formed a being called Atsu-sa-namir, (i. e. his rising is seen,) and sent him to Allat

[1] Allat, the feminine of Allah, an idol mentioned in the Qur'ân; see *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. vi. p. xii.

to demand the water for Istar and her bridegroom. Allat curses and swears, but she is obliged to set Istar free, to restore her garments, and to give to her the waters of life.

This is a short abstract of a most curious poem, so far as it can at present be deciphered [1]. It represents the annual recovery of the vernal sun which follows after the woe and wailing of the earth or of the whole of nature during winter [2].

But we shall see that the full meaning of such a poem can only be restored by a careful study of the customs connected with the death and the revival of Tammuz. Ezekiel (viii. 14) saw in a vision 'the door of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north, and behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.' This shows that the original character of the sacred ceremonies connected with Tammuz consisted in bewailing his death, although naturally these lamentations would be followed by rejoicings on the return of Tammuz.

Now we are told that another purely Semitic name of Tammuz was *Adonai*, lit. my lord, and that under that name his worship was carried to the West. 'It was above all in the Phenician town of Gebal or Byblos that the death of *Adonis*, who is *Adonai*, was commemorated. Here, eight miles to the north

[1] We are told that the myth of Istar and Tammuz was originally Accadian, and that we have here only a later Babylonian or Semitic version of it. However that may be, the general meaning of the myth is clear.

[2] Professor Tiele also, a most careful interpreter of myths, admits that the legend of Istar's descent into Hades is but a thinly veiled description of the earth-goddess, seeking below for the hidden waters of life, which shall cause the Sun-god and all nature with him to rise again from their sleep of death. (*Actes du sixième Congrès international des Orientalistes*, ii. 1, pp. 495 seq.; Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 251.)

of Beyrût, the ancient military road led from eastern Asia to the shores of the Mediterranean. Hard by was the river of Adonis, the Nahr Ibrahim of to-day, which rolled through a rocky gorge into the sea. Each year, when the rains and melting snows of spring stained its waters with the red marl of the mountains, the people of Gebal beheld in it the blood of the slaughtered Sun-god. It was then, in the month of January or June, that the funeral festival of the god was held. It lasted seven days. "Gardens of Adonis," as they were called, were planted, pots filled with earth and cut herbs, which soon withered away in the fierce heat of the summer sun, fitting emblems of the god Adonis himself. Meanwhile the streets and gates of the temples were filled with throngs of wailing women. They tore their hair, they disfigured the face, they cut the breast with sharp knives, in token of the agony of their grief. Their cry of lamentation went up to heaven mingled with that of the Galli, the priests of Ashtoreth, who shared with them their festival of woe over her murdered bridegroom. Adonis, the young, the beautiful, the beloved of Ashtoreth, was dead; the bright sun of the springtide, like the verdure of nature which he had called into life, was slain and withered by the hot blasts of summer.'

I have quoted these statements on the best authority, that of my friend, Professor Sayce. That Ashtoreth is the same word as Istar, with the Semitic feminine suffix, can hardly be doubted. That Adonis, or Adonai, 'my lord,' is another name for Tammuz, is at all events very likely. But what is of the greatest interest is that in Phenicia the annual tragedy of the death of the solar hero is placed not in the winter, but

in midsummer, the time when in that part of the world the fierce summer heat seemed to threaten and actually to destroy the vegetation of the earth (l. c., p. 231). Nor did the lamentations for his death take place in all parts of Syria at the same time. We learn from Ammianus that when Julian arrived at Antioch in the late autumn, he found the festival of Adonis being celebrated, 'according to ancient usage,' after the ingathering of the harvest and before the beginning of the new year, in Tisri or October; while Macrobius tells us that the Syrian worshippers of Adonis explained the boar's tusk which had slain the god, as the cold and darkness of winter, his return to the upper world being his 'victory over the first six zodiacal signs, along with the lengthening daylight' (l. c., p. 231). Climatic influences were sure to tell on these festivals in Syria and Babylonia, as elsewhere. In the highlands of Syria the summer was not the dangerous foe, it was in Babylonia; it was, on the contrary, a kindly friend, whose heats quickened and fostered the golden rain. Winter, therefore, and not summer, was the enemy who had slain the god.

The celebration of the festival of Adonis at different times of the year, therefore, so far from being difficult to explain, seems rather to confirm the view taken of the original character of Tammuz or Adonis, as the solar god in his annual character. His birth, his happy youth, his death, and his resurrection might well represent the different seasons of the year, and in each of them the god of the year might either be praised or bewailed, according to the view taken of his fate. It becomes perfectly intelligible too why, according to some (l. c., p. 329), Adonis shared half

the year with the goddess of death, and the other half only with the goddess of love, while according to others, who divided the year into three parts, Adonis was condemned to dwell four months in Hades, four months he was free to dwell where he might choose, and the remaining four were passed in the companionship of Ashtoreth, to whom he devoted also his four months of freedom.

Here then we see how a custom, though it begins with the simplest events which mark the ordinary course of the year, may be modified by local and other influences, and how after a time it may produce sacred ceremonies, a myth to explain them, and in the end a new religious faith.

This becomes particularly clear when we can watch a custom transferred from one country to another and the concomitant myth translated, as it were, from one language into another.

We are told (p. 229) that after the revolt of Egypt from the Assyrian king and the rise of the 26th Dynasty, Egyptian beliefs found their way into Phenicia, where the story of Osiris was mixed up with that of Adonis. Osiris too was a Sun-god, who had been slain and had risen again from the dead, so that the festival of Adonis at Gebal could easily be assimilated to that of Osiris in Egypt. It was owing to this amalgamation that the days of mourning for Adonis were succeeded by days of rejoicing at the revival of Osiris and his counterpart Adonis.

Still more curious is the way in which in Cyprus the legends of Istar and Tammuz, or Ashtoreth and Adonis, were grafted on the Greek legends of Aphrodite. The idea that the Greeks had no conception

and name of the goddess Aphrodite, before they were indoctrinated by the Phenicians, can hardly be held any longer. What happened in Egypt, happened in Greece, but while in Egypt the chief points of similarity were seen between Osiris and Adonis, in Cyprus and afterwards in Greece it was Ashtoreth, the female element of the legend, that was attracted by Aphrodite. We shall leave it undecided whether the name of Theias or Thoas, the king of Lemnos, the husband of Myrina, and the father of Adonis, is or is not a corruption of Tammuz, as Professor Sayce suggests. Adonis is represented in some Greek legends as the son of the Assyrian king Theias and of Myrrha (or Smyrna), also of Kinyras [1], the founder of Paphos in Cyprus and of Kenchreis (or Metharme). This shows that the Greeks were never in doubt that Adonis came to them from Assyria and Cyprus, and that his festival, the ἀφανισμός, the death, as well as the εὕρεσις, the finding of Adonis, was of Oriental origin. That they substituted Aphrodite for his beloved was as natural to them as that they made him stay four months in Hades with Persephone. But to suppose that the Greek Aphrodite, and all the legends told of her, owed their origin to the Phenicians, or Assyrians, or Babylonians, or Accadians, is flying in the face of all the facts, so far as known to us at present, and of all analogies.

Zeus Xenios.

Another instance of an Eastern custom modifying

[1] Kinyras is derived by Professor Sayce from *Gingira*, the Accadian equivalent of Istar. Adonis also is called *Gingras*. Kinyras was formed through a play on the Phenician word *Kinnôr*, the 'zither.' His wife's name *Kenchreis* is likewise traced back by Professor Sayce (p. 264) to Gingiras, meaning goddess, the feminine of *dingir*, creator.

the character of an ancient Greek god we have in *Zeus Xenios*. Zeus had originally no connection whatever with the custom of hospitality, whether in the sense of protection granted to strangers, or of actual hospitality offered to them. That custom was not of Greek origin, but came to the Greeks, as Professor Ihering [1] has shown, from the Phenicians. Ideas of humanity, such as we find in the Old Testament, are foreign to the ancient Aryan nations. A sentiment such as 'Ye shall have one manner of law, as well for the stranger, as for one of your own country; for I am the Lord your God [2],' would have sounded strange to the poets of the Veda and even to Homer. The one idea among the Âryas, as among most ancient people, seems to have been that whoever was not a friend, whether through relationship or citizenship, was an enemy. If he was dangerous, he could be killed, and there was no law to punish the murderer. In Latin, the stranger and the enemy had the same name, *hostis*, that is to say, they were the same thing in the eyes of the Romans.

It was by the Phenicians, the traders of the ancient world, that the necessity was felt for the first time of acquiring some kind of protection from strangers with whom they trafficked. Unless that protection was granted, they would not establish landing-places and depots for their merchandise. They could neither sell nor buy. But if they suffered, the people also suffered who wished to exchange their own produce for the merchandise brought by the Phenicians. Thus some kind of international comity sprang up between the

[1] *Die Gastfreundschaft im Alterthum*, von Rudolf von Ihering, 1887.
[2] Leviticus xxiv. 22.

Phenicians and their clients. Professor Ihering has made it very clear that the Phenicians were the inventors of the original passport, the *tessera hospitalis*, a token of mutual hospitality which was broken into two parts, each party retaining one half in order that if either of them or their descendants should meet, they might recognise one another, and remember their ancient family obligations[1]. These *tesserae* were called in Greek *σύμβολα*, from *συμβάλλειν*, used in the sense of throwing the two broken pieces together to see whether they fit[2].

When the Greeks had accepted from the Phenicians the principle of international law in its most primitive form, they would have found it difficult to invest it with any binding sanction. Some families might bind themselves to protect the free trade of the world, but to others, to whole communities, particularly to the Vikings of old, the temptation to plunder the vessels and to kill the merchants must have been great. They therefore had recourse to religion, and placed the law of hospitality under the protection of their supreme deity, Zeus, making him the protector of the stranger, and soon also of their guest, and calling him *Zeus Xenios*, a name unknown among the other Aryan nations. All this must have taken place before the days of Homer, and it is all the more important as showing us at how early a period a custom, first established by Phenician merchants, was able to modify, or at all events to expand, the character of the principal deity of the Greeks, and give rise in

[1] *Poenulus*, 1047 seq., 'Conferre tesseram si vis hospitalem, ecc' eam attuli.'

[2] This is Ihering's explanation, based on Plato, *Symposion* 191, and *Schol. in Eurip. Medea*, 613. Mommsen differs.

time to the first recognition of the rights of man as such, placed under the protection of the highest god.

How customs should be studied.

This is the spirit in which the study of customs and laws can be made subservient to the study of Natural Religion, showing how Natural Religion, indeed, may give rise to certain customs, but how, in the majority of cases, customs come first, simply as usages of proved utility, and are afterwards invested with a sacred character, simply and solely because they have been found useful for many generations. Human nature is so made, that what is old is regarded as venerable and, after a time, as sacred, so that even when it has to be changed or abolished, it is treated with reverent hands.

Nowhere can we study this growth of custom and its gradual assumption of a sacred character better than in India. In that country custom is everything, while the idea of law, in our sense of the word, hardly exists. To speak, for instance, of the Laws of Manu is a complete misnomer. Who was Manu, and what power had he to give or to enforce laws? The true meaning of the title of that book, Mânava-dharma-sâstra, is 'the teaching of what is considered right among the Mânavas,' these Mânavas not being meant originally for men in general, but for a Brahmanic family, known by the name of Mânava, and claiming Manu among their ancestors. It cannot be called a code of laws, in our sense of the word, because laws, in order to be laws, must have the sanction of some authority able to enforce them. But who is to enforce such laws as we find in Manu, or in the

Samayâkârika-sûtras, that a thief, for instance, shall go to the king with flying hair, carrying a club on his shoulder, and tell him his deed. And the king shall give him a blow with that club, and if the thief dies, his sin is expiated. Or the thief may throw himself into the fire, or he may kill himself by diminishing daily his portion of food[1]. Codes of law can only belong to a political community, such as Athens, or Sparta, or Rome, or the Roman Empire. We might have in India codes of law for the kingdoms of the Kurus and the Pândus, of Asoka or Kandragupta, but not for Mânavas, taken in the sense of mankind in general.

Fortunately we are now able to go behind these so-called Law-books of Manu, Yâgñavalkya, and others, which formerly were supposed to be of extraordinary antiquity, but which are now known to be mere metrical *rifacimenti* of older prose books, which we still possess under the name of *Sûtras*[2].

There is nothing like these Sûtras in any other literature, so far as I know. They still belong to the Vedic age, though not to the Veda, properly so called[3], and are collections, not of laws, but of ancient customs. They are divided into three classes, (1) the Samayâkârika-sûtras, (2) the Grihya-sûtras, (3) the Srauta-sûtras.

The first class contains a description of the Âkâras, i. e. the conduct, usages, and customs sanctioned by

[1] Âpastamba-sûtras, 7, 9, 25, 4, Bühler, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. ii p. 82.

[2] See Professor Bühler's masterly treatment of this subject in the Preface to his translation of the Laws of Manu, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxv.

[3] See Bühler, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. ii. p. 120.

samaya, i. e. agreement. Most of these, which are also called *Dharma-sûtras*, are embodied in the later metrical codes.

The second class describes the smaller domestic usages and ceremonies, to be observed at the various periods in a man's life, at his birth, initiation, marriage, daily sacrifices, and death. These two are mostly incorporated in the so-called Law-books.

The third class describes the great sacrifices, which are based on *Sruti* or revelation. The same sacrifices had been fully, but less systematically and clearly, described in the Brâhma*n*as. Though there is a natural element in these great sacrifices also, it is greatly overlaid by priestly inventions.

Thus while in other countries our excellent folk-lorists have to collect with great trouble what is left of usages, popular amusements, customs and superstitions, in India all this has been done for us, and has been done not once, but in a number of Brahmanic families. No doubt to a Hindu whatever is prescribed in these Sûtras is invested with a sacred character. What is not, in India? But that does not prevent us from recognising in most of the customs or â*k*âras in India simple usages, originating because they were natural, preserved because they proved useful, and at last supported by a divine authority, because both their naturalness and their usefulness had been forgotten.

LECTURE XX.

SACRED BOOKS.

What is a Sacred Book?

ALL Sacred Books came to us from the East: not one of them has been conceived, composed, or written down in Europe.

It is sometimes difficult to say what is a Sacred Book, and what is not. When I undertook some years ago, with the help of the best Oriental scholars in Europe and India, to publish translations of all the Sacred Books of the East, it was by no means easy for us to determine what books should be included or excluded. It was suggested that those books only should be considered as sacred which professed to be revealed, or to be directly communicated by the Deity to the great teachers of mankind. But it was soon found that very few, if any, of the books themselves put forward that claim. Such a claim was generally advanced and formulated by a later generation, and chiefly by theologians, in support of that infallible authority which they wished to secure for the books on which their teaching was founded. But even that was by no means a general rule, and we should have had to exclude the Sacred Books of the Buddhists, of the followers of Confucius and Lao-ze, possibly even the Old Testament, as looked upon in early times by the Jews themselves, if we had kept to that defini-

tion. So we agreed to treat as Sacred Books all those which had been formally recognised by religious communities as constituting the highest authority in matters of religion, which had received a kind of canonical sanction, and might therefore be appealed to for deciding any disputed points of faith, morality, or ceremonial.

We should not treat the Homeric poems, for instance, as Sacred Books, because, though Herodotus tells us that Homer and Hesiod made the gods of the Greeks—whatever that may mean—neither the Odyssey nor the Iliad was ever intended to teach religion. There are many books which have exercised a far greater influence on religious faith and moral conduct than the Bibles of the world. Such are, for instance, the *Imitatio Christi* by Thomas à Kempis, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Dante's *Divina Comedia*, or in Southern India the *Kural*. But none of these works received any canonical sanction; their doctrines were not binding, and might be accepted or rejected without peril.

The Five Birthplaces of Sacred Books.

There are five countries only which have been the birthplace of Sacred Books: (1) India, (2) Persia, (3) China, (4) Palestine, (5) Arabia.

Survey of Sacred Books.

I can do no more to-day than give you a very short account of the Sacred Books of the East. I may hope that by this time no one will ask what some thirty years ago an eminent London publisher asked Professor Wilson, when he offered him a translation of the Rig-veda. 'And pray, Sir,' he said, 'What is

the Rig-veda?' The collection of translations of the Sacred Books of the East, which through the liberal patronage of the Indian Government and the University of Oxford I have been enabled to publish during the last twelve years amounts now to thirty-six volumes.

It seems a long list, and yet it is only a beginning, though I trust that the next generation will carry on the work, and thus render the religious thoughts of the ancient world more and more accessible and intelligible to all who care for the sacred records of Natural Religion—for the Bibles of the whole human race.

India.

India holds no doubt the foremost rank as the mother of four great religions, each with its own code of sacred writings.

The Veda.

We have in India, first of all, the *Vedic religion*, the most ancient faith of the Aryan race of which we have any literary records.

Its records have been preserved to us in four collections of sacred poetry (mantras), called the Rig-veda-saṃhitâ, the Yagur-veda-saṃhitâ, in two texts, the mixed (Taittirîya) and the unmixed (Vâgasaneyi), the Sâma-veda-saṃhitâ, and the Atharva-veda-saṃhitâ. The most important by far is the Rig-veda-saṃhitâ, the original collection of sacred hymns, as preserved in different Brahmanic families. The Yagur-veda and Sâma-veda-saṃhitâs are collections made for liturgical purposes. The Atharva-veda contains, besides large portions taken from the Rig-veda, some curious remnants of popular and magical poetry. These deserve

more attention, particularly from the students of folk-lore, than they have hitherto received.

Next to these collections of ancient poetry, and representing a later and far more advanced period, come the Brâhmanas, all written in archaic prose, and teaching everything connected with the performance of the ancient Vedic sacrifices. The more important are the Aitareya and Kaushîtaki-brâhmana for the Rig-veda, the Taittirîya and Satapatha for the two Yagur-vedas, the Tândya for the Sâma-veda, the Gopatha for the Atharva-veda.

The Âranyakas or Forest-books form part of the Brâhmanas, and contained originally the famous Upanishads, the philosophical treatises on which the Vedânta philosophy was founded.

The latest productions of the Vedic period are the *Sûtras*, concise treatises on sacrifices, customs, laws, also on grammar, metre, etc.[1]

The periods which succeed the Vedic in the history of the Brahmanic religion are of much smaller interest to us. They can be studied in the two epic poems, the Mahâbhârata and Râmâyana, in the later Law-books, the six systems of philosophy, and the Purânas.

The Vedic religion seems to have ruled supreme from 1500 B. C. (if not earlier) to about 500 B. C.

Buddhism.

At that time a reaction took place against the exclusive claims of the Vedic faith and its privileged representatives, and out of numerous dissenting

[1] For fuller information see M. M., *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature.*

schools, three acquired political importance and historical permanence: (1) Southern Buddhism, (2) Northern Buddhism, or, more correctly, Bodhism, and (3) Gainism.

Each of these religions is represented by a large body of sacred literature:

Southern Buddhism has to be studied in the famous Tripitaka[1], the three baskets or collections, as they are called, (1) the Vinaya-Pitaka, the book of discipline; (2) the Sutta-Pitaka, the book of sermons; (3) Abhidhamma-Pitaka, the book of metaphysics[2];

Northern Buddhism has for its sacred books the Nine Dharmas[3]; and

Gainism the Siddhânta, consisting of the forty-five Âgamas[4].

Specimens of each of these canons can be found translated in the *Sacred Books of the East.*

Influence of the Kshatriyas, the Nobility.

It is important to observe that the founder of Southern Buddhism and the founder of Gainism both belonged to the second caste, the aristocracy or nobility of India, not to the priestly caste of the Brâh-

[1] See M. M., *Selected Essays*, ii. p. 177; Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, p. 18; Hardy, *Eastern Monachism*, p. 166.

[2] They were reduced to writing during the reign of Vatta Gâmani, who reigned from 88 B.C., but the canon had been closed at the second council in 377 B.C.

[3] M. M., *Selected Essays*, ii. p. 183.

[4] These 45 Âgamas consist of the 11 Aṅgas, 12 Upâṅgas, 10 Pakinnakas, 6 Khedas, 4 Mûlasûtras, and two other books. See Jacobi, Bhadrabâhu's Kalpa-sûtra, 1879; Gaina-sûtras, in *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxii. The sacred canon or Siddhânta was not reduced to writing and collected before 454 (467) or 514 (527) A.D., by Devarddhi Gaṇin; but the canon is supposed to have been closed in the third century B.C.; see *S. B. E.*, vol. xxii. p. xliii.

mans, who had hitherto enjoyed the exclusive privilege of religious teaching and of performing sacrificial acts. The founder of Buddhism was a prince, or, at all events, a nobleman, who lived about 500 B.C.; and so was Mahâvîra, the son of Siddhârtha of Kundagrâma (Koṭiggâma), the founder of Gainism, his contemporary. He is mentioned in the Buddhists' canon by the name of Nigantha Nâta-putta, i.e. the Nirgrantha of the Gñâtrika clan. *Buddha* means the Awakened or Enlightened, Gina, the conqueror, a name applied to Buddha also. Their systems share much in common, but they are kept apart both in doctrine and in ethics. The followers of the Gina number at present half a million only, those of the Buddha, who may be called the Southern Buddhists, are estimated at about 29 millions.

The name of the founder of Northern Buddhism is not known, and we shall probably be not far wrong in looking on this branch of Buddhism as a combination of Buddhist doctrines, then prevalent in Northern India, with religious and philosophical ideas imported into the country about the beginning of the Christian era by its Turanian conquerors, the Indo-Scythian races, under Huvishka, Kanishka [1], and other semi-barbarous sovereigns. The number of these Northern Buddhists is estimated at 470 millions [2].

So much for India, as the mother of four religions, to say nothing of its smaller offspring, the religion of the Sikhs, and many other still living sects.

Media and Persia.

In a wider sense India, or, at all events, the Aryan conquerors of India, may even claim some share in

[1] Kanishka convoked the famous council under Vasubandhu, as president.

[2] *Selected Essays*, ii. p. 230.

the ancient religion of Media and Persia, known to us by the *Zend-avesta*, the sacred book of the Zoroastrians. The most ancient portions of the Avesta, the Gâthas, and the hymns of the Rig-veda, are certainly the products of the same intellectual soil. They may even be called twins, and some of the students of the Zend-avesta have not hesitated to represent the Avestic Gâtha, or prayer, as the elder twin of the Vedic Sûkta, or hymn of praise.

The Avesta consists of two parts. The first contains the *Vendîdâd*, a compilation of religious laws and mythical tales; the *Vispered*, a collection of sacrificial litanies, and the *Yasna*, consisting likewise of litanies and of the five ancient Gâthas. When these three are written together, according to the requirements of the liturgy, and without a Pehlevi translation, the collection is called *Vendîdâd sâdah*, the pure Vendîdâd. The second part is called the *Khorda Avesta*, or 'Small Avesta,' containing prayers such as the five *Gâh*, the thirty formulas of the *Sîrôzah*, the three *Âfrigân*, and the six Nyâyis, with some hymn of praise, the Yasts, and other fragments [1].

China.

Outside of India and Persia, we have only China, Palestine, and Arabia, as cradles of religious literature. China gives us the works, collected rather than composed, by Confucius, and the manual of the doctrines of Lao-ʒze, the Tao-te king. Both religions, that of Confucius and that of Lao-ʒze, are still prevalent in China, together with Buddhism, which was introduced into China from Northern India in the first

[1] See Darmesteter, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. iv. p. xxx.

century B.C. Confucius and Lao-ʒze were contemporaries, both living between 600 and 500 B.C. Lao-ʒze, however, was 50 or 40 [1] years the senior of Confucius, and it is believed that he was 72 years old at the time of his birth, 604 B.C. This is perhaps the most wonderful of many wonderful achievements ascribed to the founders of religion, and its origin is probably the same as that of many other miracles—a misunderstood expression. Lao-ʒze in Chinese means the old one, literally the Old Boy. We can easily understand what such an expression really meant. It was probably kindly meant. But when after a time it did not seem sufficiently respectful, it was misinterpreted and became a myth. The founder of Tao-ism was represented as old, even when a boy, and very soon other legends were added by helpful grandmothers, who told their children that this wonderful boy had actually grey hair when he came into the world.

You would probably be inclined to say that such absurdities are possible in China only. But a comparative study of religions teaches us a very different lesson, and enables us to see even in the silliest miracles a rational and human element. We find a very similar legend in Europe—not indeed among Aryan people, but among the Estonians, a Turanian race, akin to the Fins, who live in the Baltic provinces of Russia, on the Gulf of Finland, not very far from St. Petersburg. These Estonians have, like the Fins, some ancient epic poetry; and one of their fabulous heroes is called *Wannemuine*. He was possessed of extraordinary wisdom; and the poet, in

[1] Faber, *Famous Men of China*, 1889, p. 7.

order to account for it, declared that he was not only grey-headed, but grey-bearded at the time of his birth [1].

We shall meet again and again with this curious longing after a miraculous birth, claimed for the founders or propounders of new religions by their devoted disciples and followers,—as if there could be, or as if poor human reason could even imagine, anything more truly miraculous than a natural birth and a natural death.

The Chinese views of religion are so different from our own that their religious classics have never enjoyed the authority which in India, for instance, is conceded to the Veda, or in Arabia to the Qur'ân. They received the title of King, or classic, during the Han dynasty (from 202 B.C.).

The first is the Shû-king, the book of historical documents. They profess to go back to the 24th century B.C., and they end with King Hsiang of the *K*âu dynasty, 651–619 B.C. Confucius himself lived, as we saw, in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.

The second is the Shi-king, the book of poetry. It contains 305 pieces, some of which are said to be as old as the Shang dynasty, 1766–1123 B.C. The character of these poems is by no means exclusively religious, the greater portion are simply relics of more or less ancient popular poetry.

The third is the Yî-king, the book of changes, a most obscure and enigmatic collection, chiefly intended for the purposes of divination, but interspersed with many metaphysical, physical, moral, and religious utterances.

[1] Castrén, *Finnische Mythologie*, p. 294.

The fourth is the Lî-*kî*, the record of rites, with occasional remarks of Confucius on the sacrificial worship of his country, as collected by his disciples and later followers.

The fifth is the *Khun-khin*, 'the spring and autumn,' the only one which can be called the work of Confucius himself, giving us his account of his own native state of Lû, from 722–481 B.C.

There is one more treatise attributed to Confucius, the Hsiâo-king, or the classic of filial piety, containing conversations between him and his grandson and pupil Zang-ze. It is an attempt to base religion, morality and politics on filial piety, as the cardinal virtue, and has exercised a more extensive influence than even the five great Kings.

Besides these five Kings, the Chinese treat four other books, the four Shû, as likewise of the highest authority.

They are (1) the Lun Yü, or discourses and conversations between Confucius and some of his disciples.

(2) The works of *Mencius*, a later follower of Confucius.

(3) The Ta Hsio, the great learning, ascribed to Zang-ze.

(4) The *Kung Yung*, the doctrine of the mean.

The third and fourth of the Shûs are really taken from the Lî-*kî*.

Lao-ze's views are embodied in the Tâo-teh-king, the classic of Tâo. This Tâo means primordial reason or sublime intellect, but without action, thought, judgment and intelligence. Dr. Chambers translates Tâo by way, reason, and word. Even the best

Chinese scholars despair of ever comprehending the full meaning of Lao-ʒze's doctrines, but it is easy to see that the Tâo-teh-king contains fragments of deep thought and high morality.

Palestine.

Though Palestine has produced two Sacred Books only, it may really be called the mother of three religions, of *Judaism*, *Christianity*, and *Mohammedanism*.

Judaism.

It is true, no doubt—and recent discoveries among the cuneiform inscriptions have proved it very fully—that the original germs of the Jewish religion formed the property of the whole Semitic race, and that they had reached a considerable development in the Mesopotamian kingdoms, or in Ur of the Chaldees, before they were carried to Palestine. Still the peculiar features which distinguish the Jewish from all other Semitic religions were developed in Palestine, and justify us in claiming that country as the true home of Judaism. What we call the Old Testament was known to the Jews themselves as *the Law, the Prophets*, and *the Hagiographa* [1].

Christianity.

With regard to Christianity, its Palestine origin is a matter of history—though by its later development that religion has almost ceased to be Semitic, having been re-animated and re-invigorated by Aryan thought and Aryan faith. The books of the New Testament, with the exception of some of the Epistles, were written

[1] Εἰς τὴν τοῦ νόμου καὶ τῶν προφητῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων πατρίων βιβλίων ἀνάγνωσιν. *Prol. ad Sapient. Sirach.*

in Palestine, and in Greek as spoken there in the early centuries of our era.

Mohammedanism.

Mohammedanism, no doubt, had its geographical birthplace in Arabia, but its true mother was nevertheless Palestine. It would be impossible to understand the teachings of Mohammed without a knowledge of the Old and the New Testaments. His God, as he says himself, was the god of Ibrâhîm, that is Abraham. And though the Qur'ân bears the clear impress of Mohammed's strongly marked individuality, its vital doctrines can easily be traced back to a Jewish or Christian source.

With these three, the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Qur'ân, our *Bibliotheca Sacra* is complete.

The Eight Religions.

Though the bulk of the Sacred Books of the East is enormous, yet we have seen that they represent no more than eight religions: (1) the *Vedic*, both ancient and modern; (2) *Buddhism*, Northern and Southern, and *Gainism*; (3) the *Zoroastrian* religion of the Avesta; (4) *Confucianism*; (5) *Taoism*; (6) the *Jewish*, (7) *Christian*, and (8) *Mohammedan* religions.

Book-religions.

In the East, religions are often divided into two classes, those which are founded on books, and those which have no such vouchers[1]. The former only are considered as real religions, and though they may contain false doctrines, they are looked upon as a

[1] M. M., *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 53.

kind of aristocracy to whom much may be forgiven, while the vulgar crowd of bookless or illiterate religions are altogether out of court.

To us, living in the nineteenth century, when 'black on white' has become synonymous with true, it may seem very natural that religion should be founded on something written, something black on white. But we ought not to forget that writing is a comparatively recent invention, while religion is a very old invention, if indeed it may be called by that name at all. It is quite easy to imagine that writing, to say nothing of printing, might never have been invented at all, while it is difficult to imagine, nay, as I am convinced, impossible to imagine that religion should never have been called into existence. We know that even now there are large numbers of human beings to whom writing and reading are utterly unknown, and yet they possess not only an elaborate religion, but often a priesthood, prayers, and sacrifices.

The Invention of Writing.

I believe it can be proved that the invention of what we mean by writing was a pure accident—I mean, an historical event that might or might not have taken place. No one ever sat down and racked his brain to invent letters, for, in order to do that, he must have known what letters are. Till we know what letters are, the idea of writing would seem a perfect absurdity. No wonder that a New Zealander who was appointed a letter-carrier, and who knew that these pieces of paper which he carried, conveyed some kind of information, held them, while he was drudging along, to his ear, to find out what they contained.

Even we, who are so familiar with the idea of writing, if we were suddenly asked whether it was possible to hear with our eyes, would probably say, that it was absurd to say so. And yet that is what we do in writing and reading.

We must distinguish between writing and painting. Man is, no doubt, an imitative animal, and we know that even the antediluvian cave-dwellers amused themselves with scratching the pictures of animals on horn and stone. The most uncivilised races and the most illiterate children can draw 'two eyes, and a nose, and a mouth.' Trees, animals, rivers, mountains, sun and moon, are all easy to draw, in a way; and we find such tracings not only on the walls of ancient caves, but likewise, to our great annoyance, on the walls of our own houses. With the help of a little imagination such tracings or pictures may become means of communication, up to a certain point. But this pictorial writing is very far removed from what *we* mean by writing. And it is important to observe that the only nations who invented an alphabet, the Chinese, the Babylonians, and the Egyptians, never, so far as we know, employed this purely pictorial writing even on their most ancient monuments.

How the discovery of our alphabet was made I have no time to describe in this lecture. All I can say is that it was an historical accident, that it might or might not have taken place, though, no doubt, the life of man on earth would have been very different from what it is, if writing had never been invented. We can hardly realise what life would have been without writing and reading. Whether our lot on earth would have been happier or unhappier without

writing and reading is difficult to say. We can well imagine civilised life without printing, for, after all, Plato and Aristotle, Dante and Beatrice may be called civilised beings. But without writing, life seems to some of us hardly worth living. We have no time to enter into the whole of this subject at present, but I may quote as a warning against deciding too rapidly in favour of writing as an unmixed blessing, the opinion of Plato, who held, as you know, that the invention of the alphabet was almost an unmixed evil.

Influence of Writing on Religion.

What we have to consider to-day is whether the division of all religions suggested by Mohammedan theologians into book-religions and bookless religions, touches an essential point; whether, if writing had never been invented, and there were, therefore, no sacred scriptures at all, religion would have been something different from what it is, when based on written authorities.

The Arabs, as we saw, recognised but three real religions, because they possessed written credentials in their Sacred Books. These three were, Mohammedanism, Judaism, and Christianity. Why the religions of Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius, and Lao-tze, which are likewise in possession of Sacred Books, were not admitted to that select circle does not appear, unless we suppose that Mohammedan theologians were not aware of the existence of such books.

Individual and National Religions.

Before, however, we proceed to consider this division, there is another division of religions which has

to be disposed of, namely, that into individual and national religions. To a certain extent it runs parallel with the division into bookless and book-religions, but not altogether. Some modern writers have classed the three book-religions, the Jewish, the Christian, and the Mohammedan, together with those of Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius, and Lao-ṭze, as *individual* religions, in order to distinguish them from the ancient religions of the Brâhmans, the Greeks, Romans, Teutons, Slaves and Celts, and other savage nations, which are called *national* religions [1].

This division, however, though useful for certain purposes, is utterly untenable from an historical point of view, and nothing has shown this better than some attempts which have lately been made to defend it.

The more we study the history of the religions of the world, the clearer it becomes that there is really no religion which could be called an individual religion, in the sense of a religion created, as it were, *de novo*, or rather *ab ovo*, by one single person.

This may seem strange, and yet it is really most natural. Religion, like language, is everywhere an historical growth, and to invent a completely new religion would be as hopeless a task as to invent a completely new language.

Nor do the founders of the great historical religions of the world ever claim this exclusive authorship. On the contrary, most of them disclaim in the strongest terms the idea that they have come either to destroy, or to build a completely new temple.

[1] M. M., *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 79.

Mohammed.

If we begin with the most recent religion, that of Mohammed, we find that it was clearly a reform of an older religion, and if we removed from the Qur'ân all the elements which belonged to the folk-lore and the national faith of the Arabs[1], as well as all that was borrowed from Judaism and Christianity, there would remain very little indeed that Mohammed could claim as entirely his own. Mohammed himself, in his earlier days, traced his faith back to Ibrâhîm, that is Abraham, the friend of God. He claimed him as a Moslim, not as a Jew or Christian. Christ also was looked upon by him, for a time at least, as the Spirit and Word of God, as the Messiah, and as his own immediate predecessor. The very name of the one God (l.c., p. l) whom he preached was an old Semitic name for God. Allah stands for Al-Ilâh *the* god; and Ilâh is the same word as the Hebrew Eloah, in the plural, Elohîm. Long before Mohammed, some of the Arabs had stood up for the worship of Allâh ta'âlah, the god most high, as against the worship of the host of heavens, and against the worship of idols, such as El 'Huzza, Allât and Manât (l.c., p. xiii), and the worship of stones, such as the Kaabah, which even Mohammed was obliged to retain. Without these historical antecedents, without a nation in exactly that state of religious confusion and apathy as the Arabs were at the time of Mohammed, his new teaching would have been impossible and unintelligible. Mohammed was at first no more than what the Arabs called a Hânif, a religious enthusiast, a dreamer, a man who at times was terribly afraid, as

[1] Palmer, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. vi. p. xlviii.

he confesses himself, that he might be a madman, ma*g*nûn; but nevertheless, an enlightened teacher and an honest reformer, protesting against superstitions and abuses that had crept into other religions, though hardly an originator of any new religious doctrines.

Christ.

The founder of Christianity insisted again and again on the fact that he came to fulfil, and not to destroy; and we know how impossible it would be to understand the true position of Christianity in the history of the world, the true purport of the 'fulness of time,' unless we always remembered that its founder was born, and lived, and died an Israelite. Many of the parables and sayings in the New Testament have now been traced back not only to the Old Testament, but to the Talmud also; and we know how difficult it was at first for any but a Jew to understand the true meaning of the new Christian doctrine.

Buddha.

As to Buddha, he is no doubt a strongly marked character, particularly as he is represented to us in the Southern Canon. But take away the previous growth of Brâhmanism, and Buddha's work would have been impossible. Buddhism might in fact have remained a mere sect of Brâhmanism[1], unless political circumstances had given it an importance and separate existence, which other rival sects did not attain.

Confucius.

Confucius, so far from teaching a doctrine of his own, is bent on nothing more than on proving that

[1] See Jacobi's Gaina-sûtras, in *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xxii. Introduction.

nothing is his own, that the whole of his teaching is old, and that he only hands down what antiquity has bequeathed to him.

Lao-ʒze.

We know less of Lao-ʒze, his contemporary, and the founder of Tao-ism, the grey-haired baby. Some people doubt whether the *Tâo-teh-king* is really his own work. This seems to me carrying scepticism too far; but with regard to his principal doctrine, that of *Tâo*, or the way, or the reason which supports and pervades everything, we know that the greatest antiquity, far beyond the age of Lao-ʒze, is claimed for it.

Zoroaster.

Of Zoroaster we might say with even greater truth, that much, if not all, that is told of him is pure legend. He may have been the author of some of the ancient prayers contained in the Yasna, but he was not the author of the whole Avesta. And whoever the author or the collector of the Avesta may have been, his materials had long been national property, while their deepest roots reach back to the common ground from which both the Avesta and the Veda drew their life.

Moses.

As to the Old Testament, no scholar would suppose that it was the work of one man, or that Moses was even the author of the Pentateuch. 'The Books of Moses' were to the more orthodox Jews the books telling of Moses, not the books written by Moses, just as 'the Book of Job' was the book containing the story of Job, not a book written by Job.

If now we look again at the Sacred Books of the East, what do we find?

They are all collections of religious thoughts that had been growing up for centuries among the people. They are not the creations of those whom we call the founders of the great religions of the world, but rather their inheritance, which, in most cases, they gathered up, and sifted and purified, and thus rendered acceptable to a new generation. There are no individual religions in the true sense of the word, though we may call Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism, individual reforms.

Sacred Books, when consigned to writing.

The most powerful instrument for consolidating the ancient national religions, was the art of writing. The discovery of writing and its employment for literary purposes marks the most critical period in the history of religious thought, for without it it would almost have been impossible to impart to the floating elements of religion a permanent form.

The Founders of Religions are never the Writers of Sacred Books.

And here it is very important to observe that in no case has the actual writing down of any of the great Sacred Books of the East been ascribed to the founders of religion. Even their authorship is but seldom claimed for them, but they are represented as the work of their immediate disciples or their more remote followers.

It is curious that this historical fact should have been so little taken into consideration. To me it seems one of the greatest blessings for every religion,

for it allows to all believers an amount of freedom which they would hardly have ventured to claim if dealing with the very words as written down by the glorified, in some cases, the deified authors of their religion.

The Veda originally not written.

The ancient Vedic religion reigned supreme in India long before the introduction of writing into that country. It lived by oral tradition, and even to the present day, if every MS. of the Rig-veda were lost, the text could be recovered, I believe, with perfect accuracy from the recollection of living scholars. We are never told of any Vedic poet writing his hymns, as little as we ever read of Homer writing his poems. The Vedic hymns come to us as collections of sacred poetry, belonging to certain ancient families, and afterwards united in one collection, called the Rig-veda-sa*m*hitâ. The names of the poets, handed down by tradition, are in most cases purely imaginary names. What is really important is that in the hymns themselves the poets speak of their thoughts and words as *God-given*—this we can understand—while at a later time the theory came in that not the thoughts and words only, but every syllable, every letter, every accent, had been communicated to half-divine and half-human prophets by Brahma, so that the slightest mistake in pronunciation, even to the pronunciation of an accent, would destroy the charm and efficacy of these ancient prayers. This we can hardly understand, considering how enlightened views on religion were entertained by the ancient philosophers of India.

The Avesta originally not written.

The religion of Zoroaster, which is intimately connected with the Vedic religion, existed likewise before the invention of writing, particularly the Gâthas. What we know of it, however, are the fragments of a written collection which was made, probably not long before the time of Alexander, and which, according to a very ancient tradition, was destroyed at the time of Alexander's conquest of Persia, and afterwards put together again, chiefly from memory.

The Tripiṭaka not Buddha's work.

Let us take Buddhism next. Its sacred canon is enormous. It is said to consist of 275,250 lines[1], each line consisting of 32 syllables, and its commentary of 361,550 such lines. One copy of it was written on 4,500 leaves. The Siamese translation of it amounts to 3,683 volumes. The Tibetan translation, called Kanjur and Tanjur, consists of 325 volumes, each weighing from 4 to 5 pounds in the edition of Peking. The Kanjur, published at Peking, sold for £630; another copy was bartered for 7,000 oxen by the Buriates; and the same tribe paid 12,000 silver roubles for a complete copy of Kanjur and Tanjur together.

A pupil of mine, a Buddhist priest, who came all the way from Japan to Oxford to learn Sanskrit, published at the University Press a Catalogue of all the works constituting the Buddhist Canon in its Chinese translation, and brought the number of separate works belonging to the canon to 1662.

[1] M. M., *Selected Essays*, ii. 179.

It must be quite clear that so enormous a collection could never have been written by one person, nor are we even told that Buddha himself wrote the Buddhist Bible. There may be portions in it containing his sermons, nay his *ipsissima verba*, but in the form in which we possess them they are not older than the third century B.C., the period when Buddhism became a political power, and had its councils, convoked by royal authority, to settle its sacred canon.

Confucius, writer, not author, of the Kings.

What are called the sacred books of China, the Kings of Confucius, were certainly written down by Confucius. Writing seems to have been as old a discovery in China as in Egypt. But Confucius, as we saw before, never pretended to be the author of the Kings, or the founder of the religion that is taught in them; and the same may be said, with certain reservations, of the doctrines contained in the Tâo-teh-king of Lao-ʒze.

The Old Testament.

When we come to the Old Testament, we find that the idea of writing is perfectly familiar. We never meet with any expressions of surprise or marvel at anything being written, and yet what could have been more wonderful than writing, when first brought to the knowledge of ancient peoples? That the Tables of the Law, for instance, should have been written by the finger of God, excites no astonishment, and the Hebrew language itself is full of metaphors borrowed from writing. But we are never told that Moses consigned any part of the Old Testament to writing.

It has been argued that this familiarity with the art of writing proves that the Jews used writing for literary purposes, for actual books, long before their neighbours the Phenicians, the Persians, the Ionians, and the Greeks of Europe. It may be so; but the fact admits also of another interpretation, namely, that even the most ancient books of the Old Testament were not reduced to writing before the idea of writing and of writing books had become perfectly familiar to the civilised peoples of Western Asia. And it is well known that literature flourished less among the Jews than among their neighbours.

The New Testament.

Exactly the same applies to the New Testament. We are never told in the Gospels that they were written by the Founder of the Christian religion Himself. They only profess to give us what the Apostles and others had to tell of the life and doctrine of Christ; or, more accurately, what had been handed down in Christian families, and, it may be, in Christian schools, *according* to the original teaching of some of the Apostles and their friends.

Mohammed could neither read nor write.

The most recent sacred book is the Qur'ân, and there have been many controversies among Mohammedans themselves, whether it was actually written by Mohammed or not. So far as I can judge, there is no evidence that Mohammed was even able to read or to write. It is true that *Qur'ân* means 'what was read,' from the verb *qaraa*, to read. It is likewise true that the first vision or revelation granted to

Mohammed began with the word *Iqra*, i.e. 'Read.' But Mohammed himself answered: 'I am no reader[1].' Then the angel shook him violently, and again bade him read. This was repeated three times, when the angel uttered the five verses which commence the 96th chapter of the Qur'ân:

'*Read!* in the name of thy Lord, who did create—who did create man from hardened blood.

'*Read!* for thy Lord is the most generous, who has taught the use of the pen,—has taught man what he did not know.'

Read seems to be used here in the sense of 'See' or 'Learn,' and would in no way prove that Mohammed was able to read, still less that he was able to write the Qur'ân[2]. Tradition tells us, on the contrary, that at the prophet's death no collected edition of the Qur'ân existed. Scattered fragments were in the possession of certain of his followers, written down at different times and on the most heterogeneous materials, but by far the greater portion was preserved only in the memories of men whom death might at any moment carry off. Abubekr, or rather Omar, during his reign employed an amanuensis of Mohammed to collect the sayings of the prophet 'from palm-leaves, skins, blade-bones, and the hearts of men,' and he thus produced the original text of what the Mohammedans call the *Qur'ân*, or the Lecture, as we call the Bible the *Scripture*. At a later time this text was revised with the assistance of the same *amanuensis* by the command of *Othmân*, and this has remained the authorised text of the Qur'ân from the year 660 to the present day.

[1] *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. vi, p. xx.
[2] L. c., p. lvii.

We have thus seen that not one of the Sacred Books on which the eight book-religions profess to be founded was written down by the founders of these religions. In the beginning therefore those so-called book-religions were exactly in the same position with regard to their authorities as other religions which had their doctrines and customs handed down from father to son, or from teachers to their pupils, but possessed nothing black on white to appeal to.

Religions with and without Sacred Books.

The question now presents itself, Was it essential that the religious doctrines, which had sprung up naturally in the hearts and minds of men, should at a certain period be reduced to writing, as they have been in the Sacred Books of the East? Are the bookless religions of the world really different in kind from others which profess to be founded on written codes, and have these written codes been an unmixed blessing to those who derive their religious convictions from them, and from them only?

The advantages of possessing Sacred Books are so clear that they hardly require to be stated. Sacred Books may be said to be to religion what legal codes are to law.

But this very comparison teaches us our first lesson.

Law existed before codes of law, and religion existed before codes of religion. Nay, more. Unless there had been a natural growth of law, whether in the form of sentences uttered or dooms laid down by chiefs and accepted by the people at large, there could have been no legal codes, such as the codes of

Solon or Dracon or the Twelve Tablets. And in the same way, unless there had been a natural growth of religion, whether in the form of oracles delivered or prayers uttered by prophets and accepted by the people at large, there could have been no sacred codes, such as the codes of Moses, or Zoroaster, or Buddha; there could have been no such religions as the book-religions, or, as they are called in most cases, the revealed religions of the world.

History, however, teaches us another lesson, namely that codes of law are apt to become a kind of fetish, requiring an implicit and unquestioning submission, that their historical or natural origin is often completely forgotten, and that the old ideas of what is right and just are almost absorbed, nay, almost annihilated, in the one idea of what is written and legal.

The study of Eastern religions teaches us the same lesson. Sacred books often become a kind of fetish, requiring an implicit and unquestioning faith; their historical or natural origin is often completely forgotten, and the old ideas of what is true and divine are almost absorbed in the one idea of what is written and orthodox.

And there is a third lesson which history teaches us. The sense of responsibility of every citizen for the law under which he lives is in great danger of becoming deadened, when law becomes a profession and is administered with mechanical exactness rather than with a strong human perception of what is right and what is wrong. Nor can it be denied that the responsibility of every believer for the religion under which he lives is in the same danger of becoming deadened, when religion becomes a profession, and is

administered with ceremonial exactness rather than with a strong human perception of what is true and what is false.

My object, however, is not to show the dangers which arise from sacred books, but rather to protest against the prejudice which prevails so widely against religions which have no sacred books.

There is a great difference between book-religions and bookless religions, and the difference offers, from an historical point of view, a very true ground of division. But because the book-religions have certain advantages, we must not imagine that the bookless religions are mere outcasts. They have their disadvantages, no doubt; but they have a few advantages also.

A Blackfoot Indian, when arguing with a Christian missionary, described the difference between his own religion and that of the white man in the following words[1]: 'There were two religions given by the Great Spirit, one in a book for the guidance of the white men who, by following its teachings, will reach the white man's heaven; the other is in the heads of the Indians, in the sky, rocks, rivers, and mountains. And the red men who listen to God in nature will hear his voice, and find at last the heaven beyond.'

Now that religion which is in the head and in the heart, and in the sky, the rocks, the rivers and the mountains is what we call *Natural Religion*. It has its roots in nature, in human nature, and in that external nature which to us is at the same time the veil and the revelation of the Divine. It is free, it grows with the growth of the human mind, and adapts itself

[1] *The Indians, whence came they?* by McLean, 1889, p. 301.

to the requirements of every age. It does not say, 'Thou shalt,' but rather 'I will.' These natural or bookless religions are not entirely without settled doctrines and established customs. They generally have some kind of priesthood to exercise authority in matters of faith, morality, and ceremonial. But there is nothing hard and unchangeable in them, nothing to fetter permanently the growth of thought. Errors, when discovered, can be surrendered; a new truth, if clearly seen and vigorously defended, can be accepted. If, however, there is once a book, something black on white, the temptation is great, is almost irresistible, to invest it with a more than human authority in order to appeal to it as infallible, and as beyond the reach of human reasoning. We can well understand what the ancient poets of the Veda meant by calling their hymns *God-given*, or by speaking of them as what they had seen or heard, not what they had elaborated themselves. But a new generation gave a new meaning to these expressions, and ended by representing every thought and word and letter of the Veda as 'God-given,' or revealed. This was the death-blow given to the Vedic religion, for whatever cannot grow and change must die[1]. From this danger the bookless religions are exempt.

Another advantage peculiar to these religions is

[1] Sir William Muir, in his *Rise and Decline of Islam*, pp. 40, 41, has given powerful expression to the dangers arising from sacred codes. 'From the stiff and rigid shroud in which it is thus swathed, the religion of Mahomed cannot emerge. It has no plastic power beyond that exercised in its earliest days. Hardened now and inelastic, it can neither adapt itself, nor yet shape its votaries, nor even suffer them to shape themselves, to the varying circumstances, the wants and developments of mankind.' Quoted by E. de Bunsen in an article in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*, April, 1889, *Mahomed's Place in the Church*, p. 287.

that generally they are extremely simple, not burdened with 325 volumes, weighing from four to five pounds each. When they are at their best, they seem to be simply an unhesitating belief in some higher power and a life in the sight of God.

It is painful to see how unfairly these simple bookless religions are often judged. Over and over again we are told by missionaries and travellers that they do not deserve to be called religions at all, and, on the strength of such assertions, philosophers, who ought to know better, have represented a large number of races as without any religion, as believing neither in the true God nor even in any false gods.

The blubber-eating Eskimos have sometimes been represented as altogether godless or as devil-worshippers. Mr. John Rae, who lived among them for some time, wrote to me (12 March, 1870): 'The Esquimaux believe their Great Spirit is too good and beneficent to punish them, even if they do what is wrong, but that in that case the evil spirit is permitted to have power over them. Consequently, while they pray to the former, they make offerings to the latter.'

Ever since the Jesuit Baegert published his interesting account of California in 1718, the inhabitants of that peninsula have been set down as without any religion at all. Baegert says, 'they have no idols, no religious service, no temple, no ceremonies. They neither adore the true God, nor do they believe in false gods. There is no word in their language corresponding to the Spanish *Dios* or signifying a higher being.'

Later accounts have considerably modified these

statements, and have shown that there is no longer any excuse for treating the Californians as savages without religion. Nay, the latest accounts describe their religion in such terms that we might indeed envy them their religion, at all events for its simplicity. According to de Mofras, one of the latest travellers, the 'Californians believe in a God whose origin is perfectly unknown, or, as they express it, who has neither father or mother. He is believed to be present everywhere, and to see everything, even at midnight, though himself invisible to every eye. He is the friend of all good people, and punishes evil-doers [1].'

Do you call this a bad religion? Could not a man with such a religion walk through life with a straight and steady step, if only he believes what he professes to believe, and shapes his way accordingly?

Anything that lifts a man above the realities of this material life is religion. I like to tell the story of the old Samoyede woman whom Castrén met in his travels, and asked about her religion. Poor soul, she hardly understood what he meant and why he should ask her such a question. But when at last she perceived what he was driving at, she said [2]: 'Every morning I step out of my tent and bow before the sun, and say: "When thou risest, I, too, rise from my bed." And every evening I say: "When thou sinkest down, I, too, sink down to rest."' That was her prayer, perhaps the whole of her religious service,—a poor prayer, it may seem to us, but not

[1] Roskoff, *Das Religionswesen der rohesten Naturvölker*, p. 64.
[2] M. M., *Introduction to the Science of Religion*, p. 133.

to her, for it made that old lonely woman look twice at least every day away from earth and up to heaven; it made her feel that her life was bound up with a larger and higher life; it encircled the daily routine of her earthly existence with something of a divine light. It gave her the sense of a Beyond, and that is the true life of all religion. Is there not something of the simple religion of that old Samoyede woman even in the familiar lines of Bishop Ken,

'Awake, my soul, and with the sun
Thy daily stage of duty run'?

This kind of religion may seem very imperfect, it may seem in our eyes very childish or even wrong. But it is real, and therefore a real power for good. It is a struggle for God,—if haply we may find Him; and in that struggle also—after many mistakes, it may be—it is the best that survives and lives.

The whole world in its wonderful history has passed through that struggle for life, the struggle for eternal life; and every one of us, in his own not less wonderful history, has had to pass through the same struggle; for, without it, no religion, whatever its sacred books may be, will find in any human heart that soil in which alone it can strike root and on which alone it can grow and bear fruit.

We must all have our own bookless religion, if the Sacred Books, whatever they be, are to find a safe and solid foundation within ourselves. No temple can stand without that foundation, and it is because that foundation is so often neglected, that the walls of the temple become unsafe and threaten to fall.

It is easy to say it before an audience like this, but I should not be afraid to say it before an

audience of Brâhmans, Buddhists, Parsis, and Jews, that there is no religion in the whole world which in simplicity, in purity of purpose, in charity and true humanity, comes near to that religion which Christ taught to his disciples. And yet that very religion, we are told by certain bishops, is being attacked on all sides. 'The unbelief of the day,' as one of the most eloquent bishops said at the late Church Congress, 'is not only aggressive, but almost *omnipresent*. It is found in the club and in the drawing-room. It is chattered to one by the first young gentleman who might be airing his freethought, before he had learned how to talk. It is lisped prettily sometimes from charming lips at dinner tables, and it lurks in the folds of the newspaper and the pages of the magazine and the novel.'

There may be other reasons for this omnipresent unbelief, but the principal reason is, I believe, the neglect of our foundations, the disregard of our own bookless religion, the almost disdain of Natural Religion. Even bishops will curl their lips and toss their heads when you speak to them of that natural and universal *religion* which existed before the advent of our historical religions, nay, without which all historical religions would have been as impossible as poetry is without language. Natural religion may exist and does exist without revealed religion. Revealed religion without natural religion is an utter impossibility. While some of our missionaries are delighted when they meet with some of the fundamental doctrines of their own religion. expressed almost in the same words by so-called pagans or black men, others seem to imagine it robbery that

any truth at all should be found in non-Christian religions.

Surely a truth is not less a truth because it is believed by heathens also, because it belongs to that religion which is universal? It is easy enough to discover the blemishes of other religions, though many of them seem far more gross and repulsive to us than they really are.

'It is hardly fair,' as a friend of mine wrote to me, 'to translate the Sacred Books of the East,—they are so infinitely inferior to our own.'

Yes, they are, but that is the very reason why we should look all the more carefully and eagerly for any grains of truth that may be hidden beneath an accumulation of rubbish.

The heart and mind and soul of man are the same under every sky, in all the varying circumstances of human life; and it would indeed be awful to believe that *any* human beings should have been deprived of that light 'which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.' It is that light which lighteth *every* man, and which has lighted all the religions of the world, call them bookless or literate, human or divine, natural or supernatural, which alone can dispel the darkness of doubt and fear that has come over the world. What our age wants more than anything else is *Natural Religion.* Whatever meaning different theologians may attach to *Supernatural Religion*, history teaches us that nothing is so natural as the supernatural. But the supernatural must always be *super-imposed* on the *Natural.* Supernatural religion without natural religion is a house built on sand, and when, as in our days, the

rain of doubt descends, and the floods of criticism come, and the winds of unbelief and despair blow, and beat upon that house, that house will fall, because it was not founded on the rock of bookless religion, of natural religion, of eternal religion.

Conclusion.

Allow me in a few words to recall to your memory the purpose of this course of lectures. It was to be a survey of the materials which exist, and many of which have but lately been brought to light, for studying the origin, growth, and, in many cases, the decay also of religious ideas.

In order to define the exact limits of our inquiry, it was necessary, first of all, to determine what ideas could properly be considered as religious; and I had therefore to devote some of my early lectures to a definition of religion, and to an historical examination of the more important definitions of religion given by theologians and philosophers of different ages and different countries.

After that, I felt it incumbent upon myself to explain why I looked upon an historical treatment of religious ideas as the one most likely to lead to results of permanent value. I had to defend the Historical School against a very common misapprehension, as if the historian cared only about facts, without attempting to interpret them; and as if his interest even in these facts ceased the moment he approached his own time. The true object of the Historical School is to connect the present with the past, to interpret the present by the past, and to discover, if possible, the solution of our present difficulties, by tracing them back to the causes from which they

arose. It is surely no very bold assumption that the greatest thinkers of India, Persia, Greece, Rome, of the Middle Ages, and of the whole of Europe since the revival of learning, are at least as good as we ourselves, and that they who have been our teachers and masters may continue to be our guides, even though we may pass beyond the point which they had reached.

This is the position which I felt bound to defend against that other school of philosophers who seem to think that our own inner consciousness is not only, as we all admit, a very important source of information, but should be looked upon as the one and only source from which to draw a knowledge and understanding of Natural Religion. They surely forget that even that inner consciousness of theirs is but the surface of the human intellect, resting on stratum upon stratum of ancient thought, and often covered by thick layers of dust and rubbish, formed of the detritus in the historical conflicts between truth and error.

After having thus determined, first of all, what should form the special object of our study, and secondly, what I consider the best method of that study—after having defined, in fact, the *What* and the *How*—I felt free to proceed to a consideration of the materials for a proper study of Natural Religion, or what may be called the *Wherewith* of our study.

In order to proceed systematically, it seemed to me necessary to divide Natural Religion into three branches, according as what I call the Beyond or the Infinite was perceived in nature, in man, or in the self, and named accordingly in different ways.

Of these three branches of Natural Religion I hope to treat the first, which I call *Physical Religion*, in my next course of lectures. We shall have to examine in that course the numerous names, derived from the phenomena of nature, by which the ancient people endeavoured to apprehend what lies beyond the veil of nature. We shall meet with the so-called gods of the sky, the earth, the air, the storm and lightning, the rivers and mountains. My principal object will be to show how the god of the sky, or, in some countries, the god of the storm-wind, assumes gradually a supreme character, and then is slowly divested in the minds of his more enlightened worshippers of what we may call his physical or mythological attributes. When the idea had once sprung up that nothing unworthy should ever be believed of the gods, or, at least, of the father of gods and men, the process of divestment proceeded very rapidly, and there remained in the end the concept of a Supreme Being, still called, it may be, by its ancient and often no longer intelligible names, but representing in reality the highest ideal of the Infinite, as a father, or as a creator, and as a loving ruler of the universe. What we ourselves call our belief in God the Father, is the last result of this irresistible development of human thought.

There are two more spheres of religious thought, as I pointed out at the beginning of my lectures, according as the Infinite was perceived, not only behind the phenomena of nature, but behind man, as an objective reality, and behind man, as a subjective reality.

In the former sphere of thought we discover the germs of what I call *Anthropological Religion*, which

meets us again and again in different ages and in widely distant parts of the world. Its genesis is very clear. Something not *merely* human, or something *super*human, was discovered at a very early time in parents and ancestors, particularly after they had departed this life. Their names were preserved, their memory was honoured, their sayings were recorded, and assumed very soon the authority of law. As the recollection of fathers, grandfathers, great-grandfathers and still more distant ancestors became vaguer and vaguer, their names were surrounded by a dim religious light. The ancestors, no longer merely human, approached more and more to the superhuman, and this is not far removed from the divine.

Offerings, such as had been presented to the gods of nature, were tendered likewise to the ancestral spirits, and when the very natural question arose, who was the ancestor of all ancestors, the father of all fathers, the answer was equally natural,—it could only be the same father, the same creator, the same loving ruler of the universe who had been discovered behind the veil of nature. Dyaus, the sky, and the Supreme God, was now called Dyaush-pitar, *Heaven-Father*, in Greek Ζεὺς πατήρ, in Latin *Ju-piter*.

But while in some parts of the world the idea of the primeval father was identified with the idea of the primeval god, it assumed another character among other races, namely that of the first man, the type of all mankind, being god, not as the father, but as the son[1], intimately connected with the father, yet

[1] St. Luke iii. 38, 'which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.'

not to be confounded with him. This idea, too, as you will see, arose and grew spontaneously from the soil of our common human nature, and I need not tell you in what religion it has found its fullest expression and most perfect historical realisation.

The third sphere of religious thought is that which I called *Psychological*, because it is filled with intellectual endeavours after that which lies beyond man, as a self-conscious subject, conscious of self, whatever that self may be. That self has been called by many names in the different languages of the world. It was called breath, ghost, spirit, mind, soul, genius, and many more names which constitute a kind of psychological mythology, full of interest to the student of language and philosophy. It was afterwards called the *Ego*, or the *person*, but even these names did not satisfy man, as he became more and more conscious of a higher self. The person was discovered to be a *persona* only, that is a mask; and even the *Ego* was but a pronoun, not yet the true noun, the true word which self-unconscious man was in search of. At last the consciousness of self arose from out the clouds of psychological mythology, and became the consciousness of the Infinite or the Divine within us; the individual self found itself again in the Divine Self—not absorbed in it, but hidden in it, and united with it by a half-human and half-divine sonship. We find the earliest name for the Infinite, as discovered by man within himself, in the ancient Upanishads. There it is called *Âtmâ*, the Self, or *Pratyag-âtmâ*, the Self behind, looking towards *Paramâtmâ*, the Highest Self. Socrates knew the same Self, but he called it *Daimonion*, the indwelling God.

The early Christian philosophers called it the *Holy Ghost*, a name which has received many interpretations and misinterpretations in different schools of theology, but which ought to become again what it was meant for in the beginning, the spirit which unites all that is holy within man with the Holy of Holies, or the Infinite behind the veil of the Ego, or of the merely phenomenal self.

This is but a very imperfect sketch of what I think a complete study of Natural Religion, in its three great branches, ought to be; and though I feel myself far too old and far too incompetent to survey the whole of that immense field of religious thought, I hope that those who follow me in this place will carry out this great work, which requires many labourers and many diverse gifts.

INDEX.

ABEL, Dr., page 209.
Abelard's *Theologia Christiana*, 46.
Abipones, the, 346.
Abraham, language of, 305.
Abyssinia, aboriginal dialects of, 340.
Abyssinian language, 309.
Accent in Vedic Sanskrit, 285.
Acer, 205.
Achaemenian dynasty, 302.
Acidus, 205.
— sharp, bitter, 439.
Active verb, a psychological fact, 406.
Acts conceived as passive, 387.
Acumen, 205.
Acus, acer, 439.
Acute, 204.
Aculus, 204.
Adam of Bremen, 454 *note*.
Aderism, 228.
Aditi, 131, 145, 145 *note*.
Âdityas, class of deities, 499.
Adjectives in *osus*, 35 *note*.
Admiration as religion, 65.
Adonai, 528, 529.
Adonis and Aphrodite, 525.
Adonis, death of, 528.
— feast of, 530.
— feast of, celebrated at different times of the year, 530.
Æcg., A.-S., 205.
Ægypt, Helena conveyed to, by Hermes, 493.
Aeneas, 468.
Aeolic dialect, 292.
Aeolus, 168.
ἀήρ, air, 29.
Aeschylus, in the Agamemnon, on Zeus, 384.
Aesthetic feelings in religion, 64.
Æthra, mother of Theseus, 493.
Africa, religions of, 340.
— races of, three types among the, 342.
— languages of, 342.
African languages, authorities on, 516.
— mythology, 517.
Africans, religion of the, 216.
Âgamas, the forty-five, 542.
Agglutinative languages, 320.
Agni, fire, 128.
— Fick on the derivation of, 439 *note*.
Agnihotra sacrifice, performed twice a day, 525.
Agnoia, 224.
Agnostic, 225.
Agnosticism, 108, 223, 224, 225.
— modern, 224.
— Huxley's definition of, 224.
Agnostics, 70, 71.
ἄγνωστος, 225.
Âgrâyaneshṭi sacrifice at harvest, 525.
Ague, 205.
AH, root, 438.
Ahanâ, Athene, 434.
Ahura Mazda, 496.
αἰθήρ, ether, 29.
AK, the root, 204-205.
— derivatives of, 205.
Akademos, 493.
Akkadian inscriptions, 325.

Alb, 272.
Alban'an, 303.
All things full of the gods, 72.
Allah, Al-Ilâh *the* god, 554.
Allat, 527.
Allophylian, instead of Turanian, 325.
Altaic languages, 326, 328.
Amathia, 225.
America, languages of, 343.
— four centres of language and religion, 344.
— Central, languages of, 345.
— people of, supposed to come from Asia or Europe, 346.
American languages, 208.
— grammars of, 508 *note*.
Ameshaspeñta, class of deities, 499.
Amharic, 309–310.
Ammianus on the feast of Adonis, 530.
Ammon, 60 *note*.
Analogical School of Mythology, 426, 484.
— its chief representatives, 484.
— broad mythological outlines of the, 485.
— of Philology, 419.
Anamites, language of the, 337.
Ananta, endless, 147.
Ancestors, worship of, 156, 575.
Ancestral spirits, 173, 175.
— offerings to, 174, 186.
Andacht, 36.
Angles, 286.
Anglo-Saxon, 286–287.
Anima mundi, Stahl's theory of an, 392.
Animare, 391.
Animism, 157, 158, 160, 213, 349, 391, 392.
— true key to, 391.
Ant-hill, disturbing an, 357.
Anthropological religion, 164, 574.
Anthropologie der Naturvölker, Waitz, 510.
Anthropology, 199.
Anthropomorphism, 213, 251.
— true key to, 391.
Anthropopithecos, 207.
Apache dialect, 209.
Apâm napât, lightning, 500.
Apollon, 467, 488–489.
— and Mars, as identical, 477.
— Phoebos, 479.
— performs services to Admetos, 494.
'Απόλλων and 'Απλοῦν, 429.
Apuleius, 177.
Arabic, 304, 308.
— words for religion in, 93.
— classical, 308.
— as spoken, 308.
Aramaic, 304–305.
— a lingua franca, 305.
— or Chaldee, used by the Jews, 306.
— or Syriac, used by Christians, 306.
— used by Christ, 306.
Âranyakas, 541.
Araucanian of Chili, 209.
Archaeology, 200.
Arctic or Hyperborean tribes, 345.
Ares, 467.
Argeiphontes, killer of Argos, 469, 480.
Argos changed into a peacock, 469 *note*.
Arguna, 231.
Argyll, Duke of, 126, 128, 227.
Aristotle, 72, 72 *note*, 278.
— his etymologies, 30.
— theology, 45.
— all things full of the gods, 72.
Armenian, 295, 303.
Armorican, 290.
Arowakes, 345.
Aryan family, 203, 282–283, 311, 315.
— North-western division, 293, 295.
— South-eastern division, 294–295.
— religions, 214.
— theogony, 227.
— savages, 241.
— words shared in common belonged to the whole Aryan race, 295.
— Separation, the various Aryan languages existed as dialects before the, 294.

Aryan roots, 385.
— concept of a Somebody, sending and curing diseases, 489.
Aryas in Italy, 291.
Asâmi, 301.
Ashtoreth, 529, 531.
— attracted by Aphrodite, 532.
Ashy grey from shame, 179.
Asoka, inscriptions of, 298, 299, 300.
— edicts for the people, 298.
— in living but ungrammatical dialects, 299–300.
Âsramas, the four, 67.
Asru, tear, 438.
Ass vomiting gold, 487.
Assyria and Babylon, ancient language of, 304.
Astarte in Greece, 457.
Asura, living, 130.
As-va, equus, 281, 367.
Athapascan, 209.
Atheism, 213, 228.
— Fichte on, 58.
Athene, 434.
— her birth from the head of Zeus, 437.
— her name Koryphasia, 437.
— Benfey's theory of, 442.
— Darmesteter on, 445 *note*.
— and Daphne, 477, 483.
Athenian prayer for rain, 171.
Âthwyânô, âptyânâ, 443.
Âtma, 163, 164.
— the self, 576.
Atthis, or Attica, 444.
Attic dialect, 292.
Aurora, epithets of, 416.
Auspicia, 39.
Australia, dialects of, 347.
— religions of, 348.
Australians, religion of the, 216.
Author's definition of religion, 193.
Avaiki, the Hades of the Mangaians, 460.
Avesta, 12, 302, 556.
— endless in the, 147.
— its parts, 544.
— originally not written, 559.
Avîci, the lower regions of Brahmans and Buddhists, 460.
Ayenbite, 180.
— of Inwyt, 180.
Azteks in Mexico, 344.

BABARA, son of Pravahana, 235.
— same as Vâyu, the wind, 235.
Babylon, statues of, 79.
— sacred hymns of, 304.
— more modern in civilisation than the Vedic hymns, 305.
— and Nineveh, Turanian civilisation of, 325.
Bacon, 138.
Baegert on California, 567.
Baga, Zend, 436.
Ballantyne, 100 *note*, 231 *note*.
Bancroft, 453 *note*.
Bang, 364.
Bântu languages, on East coast of Africa, 312.
— races or Kafirs, 341.
Barrow, 467.
Barth, A., 22 *note*.
Basks, 303.
Be, to, 127.
Bedouin poetry, 308.
Beginning of all things, 131.
Being, 127.
— and not being, 268.
Bel or Baal, 455.
Belief and knowledge, 70 *note*.
— Flint on, 70 *note*.
— in God the Father, 574.
Benfey's theory of Athene, 442.
Bengâli, 301.
Beowulf, the, 286.
Berber language, 340.
Bergaigne, 521.
Bergamese, used by Arlechino in Italian Comedies, 301.
Berger, 317.
Berkeley, 369, 370, 371.
— on the general image of a triangle, 382.
Beseelen, 391.
Beyond, the, 123, 126, 131, 139, 190.
Bhag, 96, 97.
— bhagati, 96.
Bhaga, the divider, 436.

Bhagavadgîtâ, 97, 98, 99, 231, 233.
Bhakta, 97.
Bhakti, 96, 97, 99, 100, 101 *note*.
Bhumij, dialect of the, 336.
Bible, Bulgarian translation, 293.
Biblical words for religion, 42 *note*.
Bier, 368.
Bihârî, 301.
Bishop, 31.
Bitter, 116.
Blackfoot Indian on his religion, 565.
Bleek, African languages, 341, 516.
Blood, hair, and bones, teach nothing of religion, 338.
Blushing, 179.
Bodhism, 104, 542.
Bodley, Sir T., 71 *note*.
Bogŭ, Slavonic, general name for god, 436.
Bohemian, 293.
— its literature, 293.
Bolognese used by the Doctor in Italian Comedies, 301.
Book-religions, 214-215, 549.
Bopp, 268, 278.
Bore, to, 368, 368 *note*.
Boreas, the wind blowing, 437.
— and Zephyros, 169.
Borneo, use of handkerchief in, 272.
Bourke, J. G., 349 *note*.
Bovè, Giacomo, on the language of Tierra del Fuego, 83.
Bovine stare, without words, 352.
Bow in the cloud, 171.
Bow-wow in English, but kliff-klaff in German, 362.
Bow-wow theory, 206, 207, 208, 362, 373.
Brahman, 104 *note*.
Brâhmana, 252.
Brâhmanas, 249, 296, 301, 541.
— in prose, 296.
— Sanskrit of the, 296.
Brahmanic view of religion, 67.
Brahmanism, 275, 295.
— sacred books of, 214.
Brahuis, dialect of the, 336.
Brazil, aborigines of, 346.
Bréal and Decharme, representatives of the analogical school of mythology, 484.
Bright and heavenly beings, 242.
Brihadâranyaka, 111.
Brinton, Dr., 134 *note*, 208, 208 *note*, 217, 453 *note*, 512 *note*.
Brockhaus, 17.
Bronze at Hissarlik, 201.
Brugmann, 422 *note*.
— his derivation of σέβας, 42 *note*.
Buddha, 221, 271, 275, 551.
— and Mâluńkya, 105.
— means Awakened, 543.
— followers of, 543.
— religion of, 553
Buddha's teaching, 107.
— existence after death, 109.
— faith, 191.
Buddhism, 93–107, 541.
— no god recognised by, 28.
— is it a religion? 28, 104.
— not a religion, 89.
— no Creator mentioned in, 105.
— included in author's definition, 190.
— the nothing of, 190.
— sacred books of, 214.
— Northern and Southern, 295.
— used the spoken dialects, 299.
— become merely formal in Japan, 339.
— Southern, 542.
— Northern or Bodhism, 542, 543.
— political circumstances separated it from Brahmanism, 555.
Buddhist missionaries, 78.
— condemned to death, 113.
— Sanskrit, 299.
Buddhist canon, 299.
— Northern, 299, 300, 301.
— Chinese translations of, 300.
— Southern, 299, 301.
— reduced to writing, 300.
— less grammatical than the Northern text, 300.
Buddhists, meaning of dharma among, 95.
— reject a Creator, 253, 255.
— number of, 543.
Buffon, 264.

Bühler on the Laws of Manu, 536 *note.*
Bulgaria, 333 *note.*
Bulgaric, 333, 333 *note.*
Bulgarian, Old, 293.
— translation of the Bible, 293.
Bunsen and Niebuhr, 84.
Burden, 368.
Buriäts, traces of grammar in the dialect of the, 332.
Burmese language, 337.
Burn, to, 366.
Burnouf, Eugène, 19.
Bushmen, the, 341.

CAERIMONIA, 38.
Caird, Dr., 162 *note*, 240 *note.*
— his definition of religion, 57, 60, 61.
Caldwell, Bishop, 217.
Calendar, the, 523.
California, faith of the natives of, 254.
— denied by Sir J. Lubbock, 255.
— Baegert on, 567.
Callaway, Dr., 516.
Cambodians, language of the, 337.
Cap(i)ta, 437.
Care, cura, 454.
Caribes, the, 345.
Carolingian Psalms, 287.
Carthage, language of, Semitic, 340.
Carthaginian, 307.
Cassiodorus, on religio, 39.
Cassock, 272 *note.*
Castrén, 217–249, 249 *note*, 332.
Category of causality, 250.
Cattle, breeders of, 200.
Caucasus, languages of the, 337.
Causality, 404.
Cause, the infinite as, 124.
— concept of, 139.
— origin of the idea of, 254.
Celtic, 287, 290.
— migration, 290.
— literature is recent, 290.
— mythology and ancient religion, 290.
Celtic, features in common with Latin, 294.
Celtic, Bel or Beal, 455.
Celts in Galatia, 290.
Ceres, from Sk. root kar, 449.
— from karsh, 450.
Cerfus (sardha), 450.
Cerus Manus, 450.
Cetwayo, 217.
Ceylon, 283.
Chaldee or Western Aramaic, 306.
— of the Targums, 306.
Chamisso on Polynesian religion, 89 *note*, 357.
Chance and purpose, 226.
Chantepie de la Saussaye, 222.
Characters common to gods and heroes of different names, 485.
Chasuble, the, 272, 272 *note.*
Chester, 84.
Children beat their dolls, 212.
Chimpanzee, Kant on the, 266.
China, 544.
— ancestral law in, 173.
— family council in, 174.
— books of record in, 174.
— filial piety in, 175.
— religions of, 214.
Chinese, 320, 321.
— words for religion in, 92.
— Classic of filial piety, 175.
— literature, age claimed for, unsupported by evidence, 323.
— — destroyed B. C. 213, 323.
— Classics, 546, 547.
Chingis-Khan, 329, 331.
Christ, 221, 555, used an Aramaic dialect, and also Greek, 306.
Christian religion, 553.
Christianity, 275, 548.
Christians called ἄθεοι, 228.
Cicero, 127, derivation of religion, 33, 34 *note*, 35.
— definition of, 38, 38 *note*, 86, 88.
— and the cultus deorum, 182.
— on the gods, 226.
Civil theology, 45.
Clamor concomitans, 374.
Classical dialects, stagnant and dead, 297.
Climatic influences affect myths, 530.

Clouds, Stars, Sky, 153.
Cocoa-nut tree and cacao tree, 467.
Codrington, Dr., on the Melanesian languages, 347, 515.
Confucianism, 92.
Confucius on offerings to ancestors, 175.
— traditions of, 215.
Cogitare, as including sensation, perception, memory, etc., 353.
Cognoscere Deum et imitare, 56.
Colenso, Bishop, and the Zulu, 349.
Coln, 84.
Colonial Office, 504.
Colonies, Ethnological Records of the, 505.
Colotes on religion, 521.
Comedia delle arte, 301.
— dialects used in the, 301.
Communication, not language, 356.
Comparative Mythology, 417, 423.
— A. Barth on, 424.
Comparative Philology, 278, 418.
— three schools of, 419.
Comparative Theology, 47, 52-53.
— Religion, 47.
Concept, a, without a name for it, 354.
Conception, 162.
Concepts, 115, 116.
— and intuitions, 119, 143.
— Euler on, 122.
— follow precepts, 129.
— general, 207.
— origin of, 211, 372.
— 121 radical, 366.
— and their signs are simultaneous, 369.
— genesis of the first, inevitable, 373.
Conceptual foundation of language, 378.
— thought, the Dyad as foundation of all, 379.
— world, our, 381.
Confucius, 544, 555.
— and Lao-ʒze, contemporaries, 545.
— religion of, 553.
Confucius, writer, not author, of the Kings, 560.
Conscience, 63, 177-182.
— no Sanskrit word for, 178.
— conscientia, 180.
— Lorimer on, 182 *note*.
Conscious and conscience, 178, 180-181.
Cook, Captain, on the language of the Tierra del Fuegians, 82.
Cope, the, 272.
Copernican system, 254.
Cornish, 290.
Corpus, 451.
Cosmological arguments, 198, 240, 241, 244, 250.
— answers to, 245.
Cotta on religion, 88.
Council of Nicea, 8.
Cowell, 100 *note*, 231 *note*.
Cox, Sir G. W., a representative of the Analogical School of Mythology, 484, 492.
Creation, problem of, 239.
— Semitic assertion of, 253.
— Aryan denial of, 254.
Creator, Darwin's view of a, 226, 260.
— in the Veda, 245, 251, 253.
— rejected by Buddhism, 253, 255-256.
— by Heraclitus, 253, 255.
— by the negroes, 256.
— religions without a, 256.
Creed, *credo*, 102.
Criticism, benefit of honest, 192.
Croatian, 293.
Cuckoo, 364.
Cultus deorum, 38.
Cuneiform inscriptions of Cyrus, Darius, and Xerxes, 302.
— language of the, 302.
— of Assyria and Babylon, 304.
— language of, akin to that of Abraham, 305.
Curtius, G., 422.
— derivation of Vesta, 450.
Customs and laws as materials for the study of Natural Religion, 280.

Customs and Laws, 519.
— based on religious ideas, 520.
— served as a basis for religious ideas, 520, 522.
— domestic, 523.
— are at first only useful usages, then gain a sacred character, 535.
Cute, 204.
Cymric, 290.

DABH, DAGH, 440.
DAH, root, 438.
δαμόνιον, 178.
Dalmatic, the, 272.
Danâyu, Holtzmann on, 439 *note*.
Danish, 287.
Daphne, 438, 440, 441, 477, 483.
Δάφνη and Δαύχνη, 440.
Dar, to tear, dru, tree, 382.
Darapsky, Dr., 209 *note*.
Darmesteter on Śraddhâ, 102.
— on Athene, and Zend atar, 445 *note*.
— on Varuna, 495, 497.
Darśapûrṇamâsa Sacrifice, every full and new moon, 525.
Dar-u, tree, 281.
Daruṇa, cruel, with a wooden heart, 383.
Darwin, 257, 260, 261.
— on Dog's religion, 69 *note*.
— on religious devotion, 69 *note*.
— on Tierra del Fuego, 82.
— his view of a Creator, 226.
— his Origin of Species, 258.
— admits a Creator, 260.
— his Descent of Man, 266.
— his view of man, 267.
— his real merit, 273.
Dawn, the, 144–146, 146 *note*, 430.
— plurality of, in the Veda, 432.
Day, from root DHAGH, 438.
Deaf and Dumb, signs used by the, 359.
Death, continuance after, 156.
De Bonald, 138 *note*, 237 *note*.
De Brosses on Fetishism, 219.
Decharme, *Mythologie de la Grèce Ancienne*, 480 *note*.
Definition, 29.
— three kinds of, 29.
— etymological, 29.
— historical, 32.
— dogmatic, 32.
— of Religion, author's own, 102, 114, 188.
Definitions, different classes of, 59.
δεισιδαιμονία, 42, 43.
Delbrück, 422 *note*.
Deluge, as punishment, 171.
De Lagarde, on Rückert's Dravidian lectures, 325 *note*.
Dénée Dindjié language, 210, 210 *note*.
Demi-gods, 154.
Dependence as religion, 68, 70.
δέρμα, 383.
Descartes, 71 *note*, 257, 278.
— on the infinite, 123.
— on God, 255.
— use of cogitare, 353.
Determinatio est negatio, 125.
Deus, deva, 31, 196 *note*, 393, 394.
— singular or plural, 56.
— and Θεός, 393, 446.
Δεύτερος, dvitîya, 421.
Deva, bright, 31, 99 *note*, 393.
Devas, gods, 32, 87, 137, 218, 227.
Devatâs, 163.
Devotion, 49.
— idea of, in the Upanishads, 98, 99.
Dhammapada, the, 111, 190.
Dharma, 94.
— among the Buddhists, 95.
Dharmá, support, 95.
Dhárman, one who holds, 95.
Dharmas, the nine, 542.
Dharma-sûtras, 537.
Dialectic Growth, 419.
— School of Philology, 420.
Dialects went their own way, 294.
— literary, 297.
— non-literary, 297.
Dies Martis, 289.
Dieu, le bon Dieu, in Iroquois, 513.
Differentiated characters came first, 128.
Dig, to, 366.
Dii, 32.

Diligentes, diligere, 33.
Dîn, in Arabic, 93.
Dionysos, born at Nysa, 469 *note*.
Dios-kuroi, their war against Athens, 493.
Diphthong *ai*, 285.
Divina Comedia, 539.
Divine, 57.
— Mind and Will, Martineau, 57, 62.
— as cause, 197.
— as excellence, 197.
— as the negative of human weakness, 198.
Divinity, 218.
Dog, feelings of the, 69 *note*.
— knowing red and blue, 360.
— we never see a, 381.
Dogmatic definition, 32.
— definitions of religion, 37, 43, 44.
— and practical religion, 46, 47.
— theology, 46, 47.
Dogs, have a religion, 69 *note*.
Donner, Prof., 378, 380.
— on Akkadian, 325 *note*.
Dooms, 173.
Doric dialect, 292.
Doubts on the existence of the gods, in the Veda and in Indian literature, 227–228.
Draft, 368.
Dramatic or dynamic stratum of language, 390, 391.
— key to Animism, etc., 391.
Dravidian or Tamulic languages, 336.
Drink poured on the ground in memory of the dead, 186.
Drobisch, 16, 17.
Druides, drui, 383.
Dryades, 154, 383.
Duck, 468.
Dugald Stewart, 283.
Duke, 437.
Duo, dvau, 420.
Dûre-ante, with distant ends, 147.
Dutch, Old, Middle, and Modern, 287.
Dyad, the, as the beginning of conceptual thought, 379.
Dyaus, sky, 127, 130.
— a masculine, 409.
Dyaus, 410, 465.
— Zeus, 448.
Dyaus and Ouranos, 501.
Dyaush-pitâ, 130, 410.
Dynamic stage, 385, 390.
Dyu, 289.
— first masculine, then feminine, 409.

E changed to i, 35 *note*.
Ear of corn, 205, 278.
Earth, 152.
East-Nordish, Swedish, and Danish, 287.
East-Teutonic, 290.
Eddas, the two, 287.
Edkins, Dr., 320.
Egg, the Golden, 248.
— in Finland, 249.
— in Egypt, 249.
— in the Orphic mythology, 249.
Egg on, 205.
Ego-knowledge, 115, 149.
— the, 576.
Egypt, the religion of, 339.
— language of, thought by some to be the most primitive, 340.
— words for God in, 393, 394.
— — represent real powers of the universe, 396.
Egyptian deities, 79.
— ancient, 321–322.
Ehkili dialect, 310.
Eight Religions, 549.
Elder, 31.
Elegantes, elegere, 33.
Elegare, lost verb, 33 *note*.
Eloah, 554.
Emanation, theory of, 245.
— in the Veda, 245, 247.
End and endless, 146.
Energies, 127.
English, 237, 282, 284.
— Judge and Buddhist criminal, 113.
— modern, 203.
— grammar, purely Teutonic, 291.
— twice influenced by Latin, 291.

English Dictionary, words in the New, 365.
Ennius, 155.
—on Jupiter, 163.
Ens or *essentia*, 127.
Entwickelung, 259.
Epicurean view of the Gods, 226.
Ἐποχή or agnosticism, 108, 224.
Erinnys, 465.
Erinys, 433.
— called Eumenides, 481.
Eros, 466.
— and Psyche, 177.
Eskimos, 567.
— legends of, 217.
— language of, 345.
'Essays and Reviews,' 258.
Estonians, 336, 545.
Ether, number of vibrations in a second, 118.
Ethical theory, 170.
Ethiopic, 309.
— inscriptions in ancient, 309, 500 A.D.
Ethnological Records of the English Colonies, 505.
Ethnology, 199.
— United States Bureau of, 506, 507.
Ethno-psychological philology, 423.
Etruscan, 303.
Etymological definitions, 29.
— in India, 30.
— of religion. 33–36.
Etymological meaning must be physical, 465.
Etymological School of Comparative Mythology, 426, 428.
Etymological School of Philology, 419.
Etymologies, 29–31.
— learned and popular, of the Greeks and Romans, 466.
Euler on concepts, 122.
Eumenides or Erinyes, 481.
Εὐσέβεια, 42.
Evans, Mr. A., on Hissarlik, 201.
Evidence, three kinds, admitted by Kapila, 229, 230.
Evolution, theory of, 143, 245, 257.
— meaning of, 258, 259.
Evolution, Kant's views on, 259.
— Herder's views on, 261.
Experience, religious, begins with the senses, 195.
Extra-mundane beings, Logos and causes, 141.
Eye, 368.

FACTS, logic of, 240.
Faith, 242.
Family council in China, 174.
Faraud, Bishop, 209.
Farther India, languages of, 337.
Father of the father, 255.
Father Sky, 410.
Fear of God, 64.
— as religion, 64.
— made the gods, 170.
— of the gods, 171.
Feeling or knowledge as motive of action, 55.
— and perceiving are beyond comprehension, 117.
— is resisting, 119.
Fenris wolf, the, 486.
Feronia, as Juno Virgo, 475.
Festivals, annual, 524.
Festus, on religio, 34.
Fetish, Jupiter a, 158.
— worshippers, 212.
Fetishism, 87, 154, 158, 160, 196 *note*, 213, 219, 349.
— of negroes, 219.
Feuerbach's definition of the gods, 74.
Fichte, 69–70, 72.
— on Atheism, 58.
— — moral action, 172.
Fick's derivation of agni, 439 *note*.
Fides, or troth with the Romans, 176.
Filial piety in China, 175.
Fimbulty, the Celtic unknown god, 225 *note*.
Finite, implies infinite, 122–125, 127, 195.
— Savages without a word for, 125.
Finiteness in space, time, and quality, 122.

Finland, popular tales in, 494.
Finnic class, 334.
— Prof. Donner on the, 378, 380.
Finno-Ugric class, 333.
— SAR in, 378, 380.
Fins or Suomalainen, 334.
— worshipped natural objects in their visible form, 400.
Fire assisting the sun, 187.
First cause, the, 250.
Fleischer, 17.
Flemish, 287.
Flint, Prof., Theism, 51 *note*, 63 *note*, 70 *note*, 170, 181 *note*, 182 *note*, 275 *note*.
Foreign gods, 455.
— influences on Greek mythology, 456.
Fors, fortuna, 472. 473.
— Primogenia, 473.
Fortuna, the goddess in Egyptian, i. e. Renenet, 474.
— Huiusce Diei, 475.
— identified with Harit, 475.
Founders of the historical religions never claim the exclusive authorship, 553.
— — never the writers of Sacred Books, 557.
Founding of cities, 200.
Frater, frère, hermano, 316, 317.
Freedom, as religion, 69, 70.
French, earliest works in, 291.
Friedrich der Grosse, 488.
Frisian, Old, 287.
Fröhde, his derivation of Loxias from laksh, 490 *note*.
Fulahs, the, 341.
Fulgurator, Jupiter, 167.
Fulminator, Jupiter, 167.
Future, the, in Romanic languages, 318.

Γ and ζ vary on Greek soil, 429.
Gaelic, 290.
*G*aimini, the philosopher, 235.
*G*ainism, 295, 542, 543.
— sacred books of, 214.
— Aṅgas of, 301.
— canon reduced to writing, 454, or 527 A. D. canon closed third cent. B. C., 542 *note*.
Galatia, in Asia, Celts in, 290.
Galla dialect, 340.
Gallatin, 512 *note*.
Gallic of the ancient inscriptions of Gaul, 290.
Galton and the human face, 381.
— on compound images in the mind, 359.
Gangetic languages, 337.
*G*anitâ dyâvâprithivyoḥ, father of heaven and earth, 140.
*G*âratkârava Ârtabhâga, 111.
Garbe, R., 230 *note*.
*G*âtakas, the, 114.
Gates of knowledge, 194.
— of ivory, and of horn, 468.
Gâthas, the, 544.
Gâthâ dialect or mixed Sanskrit, 299.
— Buddhist books translated into Chinese, 300.
Gather, to, 365.
Geez or Ethiopic, 309.
Geiger, 499 *note*.
Gellius, 35, 35 *note*, 36.
Gender, 407.
— powerful element in producing mythology, 408.
Genus proximum, 54.
Geographical contact has nothing to do with grammatical similarity, 294.
— distribution of roots, 450.
Georgian language, 338.
Gerda, the giantess, 485.
Gesture-language, 358.
Gewissen, 179–180.
Gewissensbisse, 180.
Ghar, to glow, 470.
Gifford, Lord, 1–15.
— his study of Plato and Spinoza, 3–4.
— his rejection of miracles, 3.
— a true Christian, 3.
— his will, 4–7, 15, 578–584.
— definition of Natural Theology, 5.
— his views on lecturers and lectures, 6, 7.

Gill, Rev. W. W., 515, 516.
— on shame, 179 *note*.
*G*ina, means the conqueror, 543.
— followers of, 543.
Gnosticism, 224.
God, true knowledge of, 5.
— or the gods, religion has to do with, 28.
— what is meant by, 58.
— the will of, 61.
— the fear of, 64.
— the unknown, 71.
— not the only object of religion, 188.
— existence of, a syllogism, 198.
— the idea of, among savages, 213.
— the predicate of, the great problem, 219.
— as Causa sui, 255.
— Descartes on, 255.
— belief in, not founded on a subtle syllogism, 241.
— origin of the concept of, 394.
— Egyptian names for, 394.
— Semitic names for, 396.
— Finnish names for, 399.
— the Father, belief in, 574.
God-given, God-inspired, 2,56.
Gods of barbarians, 30.
— or Devas, subordinate beings in Southern Buddhism, 105.
— names of, derived from material objects, 131.
— unnamed in Egypt, 225 *note*.
— foreign, 455.
— names of the, 462.
Goethe, 65, 225, 264.
— and Lavater, 59.
— on reverence, 65.
— on creation, 227.
Goidelic, 290.
Goldwin Smith, 181 *note*.
Goldziher, 453 *note*.
Gonds, dialect of the, 336.
Good Mind and Bad Mind of the Hurons, 313.
Gospels, not written by Christ, 561.
Gothic, 203, 286, 287, 288.
— parallel with Vedic Sanskrit, 289.
Grammar, general, 53.
Grammar, comparative, 53.
Granville, Lord, 505.
Grassmann, derivation of Ceres, 450.
Gratiae, the, 472.
Gratus, 471.
Great, the infinitely, 138.
— gods, 154.
Great gods of heaven and earth, 65,000, 396.
Great Spirit, 402.
— Gitse-Manito, 511 *note*.
Greece and Rome, religion of, 275.
Greece, worship of Astarte and Melikertes in, 457.
Greek has greater similarity with Sanskrit than with Latin, 292.
— used by Christ, as well as Aramaic, 306.
Greeks, faith of the early, 89.
— and Romans, religion of the, 215.
Greenlanders, 345.
Grey, Sir George, 506.
Grihya-sûtras, 536.
Grimm, 268, 278.
— on Wuotan, 489.
Grimm's Law, 287, 288.
Grosventre Indians, 402.
Gruppe, Professor, 22, 24, 74, 141, 143, 144, 148, 194 *note*.
— on the birthplace of religion, 78.
— his theory, 78, 79, 80.
— on worship, 187.
— on Zeus and Dyaus, 409.
— on mythological etymologies, 442, 471 *note*.
— his bickerings, 451 *note*.
— three causes of the spread of religion, 75.
— definition of religion, 76.
— historical transmission of religion, 78.
Gubernatis, 100 *note*.
Gujarâti, 301.
Gundert, Dr., 327 *note*.
Guru, 99.
Gymnosophists of the Ganges, 229.

H, Sanskrit, represents gh, dh, and bh, 435.

Hades, name for in Polynesian, Sanskrit, etc., 460, 461.
Haeckel's deep-sea ooze, 265 *note*.
— his views on man, 267.
Hærfest, A.-S., autumn, 451.
Hahn, T., 86 *note*, 217.
— on African languages, 516.
Hahn's general categories of mythological characters, 492.
Hale, Horatio, 217, 312 *note*.
Haltias or powers of nature in Finland, 399, 400.
— a spirit-like power, 401.
— in man, 401.
Hamitic languages, 340, 343.
Hand, hinthan, to seize, 368.
Handkerchief, how used in Borneo, 272.
Hânif, a religious enthusiast, 554.
Hannibal and the ten Roman soldiers, 176.
Har, the root, 471.
Hardy, Dr., 12 *note*.
Haritas and Χάριτες, 452, 470.
Harran, bilingual inscription of, 308.
Harrari dialect, 310.
Hartenstein, 16.
Hartung, 176 *note*.
Haryaksha, 471.
Haupt, 16.
Hawai'i, Hades in Tahitian, 461.
Hear, to, 387.
Heaven and earth, 147.
Heaven-father, 130, 242.
Hebrew, 305, 307.
— spoken by Moabites and Philistines, 307.
— ceased to be spoken in general, 307.
— a corrupt, still used, 308.
— El, compared with Nutar, 395.
Hebraic, 304, 307.
Hegel, 25, 69, 70, 220, 264.
— his definition of religion, 190.
Helena, 467, 492, 493.
— carried off by Theseus, 493.
— conveyed to Ægypt, 493.
Heljand, the 286.
Hellenic class, 292.
Hellwald, 141.
Heracles and Herculus, 455.
Heraclitus, on fire as the origin of all things, 245, 253.
— rejects a creator, 253, 255.
Herder's views on evolution, 261–264.
— on man, 263, 268.
— on language, 264.
Hermann, Gottfried, 16, 265, 267.
— on Adam and Eve, 265.
Hermeias, a god, 453, 482.
Hermes, 171, 465.
Hesiod, the first-born gods, 154.
Hibbert Lectures, 23.
— translations of M. M.'s, 94.
— on religious knowledge, 194.
Hidatsas in North America, 402.
High German, 289, 290.
— Old, Middle, and Modern, 290.
Himalayan hill tribes, Mr. Oldham on, 502.
Himyaritic inscriptions, 309.
Hissarlik, strata at, 201.
Historical definition, 32.
— of religio, 36–41.
— evolution, 143.
— argument for Natural Religion, 198.
— method, 198.
Historical School, 103, 199, 201, 203, 207, 210, 212, 214, 216, 217, 219, 220, 258, 269, 276, 277.
— deals with the present and not only with the past, 278.
History *versus* Theory, 196.
— and Theory inseparable. 223.
— original meaning of, 258.
— and science must not be confounded, 276, 277.
Holtzmann on Danâyu, 439 *note*.
Holy Ghost, 179, 577.
Hommel, Die Sumero-Akkaden, 325 *note*.
Homer and Hesiod as Theologi, 45.
Homer's etymologies, 29.
Hooker, Dr., 152.
Hos, dialect of the, 336.

Hostis, stranger and enemy, 533.
Hottentots, the, 312, 341.
— their belief in a Supreme Being, 86.
— mythology among the, 517.
Houzian, M., 69 *note*.
Hrî, shame, 179.
— to be ashamed, 471.
Hsiâo-king, or classic of filial piety, 547.
Human element in revelation, 9
Humboldt on the power of a word, 462 *note*.
Humboldts, the two, 269.
Hunfalvy, Dr., on Ugric languages, 320 *note*, 321.
Hunters and fishermen, 200.
Huron, tale of the world-supporting tortoise, 312.
— of Good Mind and Bad Mind, 313.
Hush, Husch, and their derivatives, 363.
Huvishka, Kanishka, of the Indo-Scythian races, 343.
Huxley, 117 *note*, 239.
— definition of Agnosticism, 224.
— on the Aryan savage, 242.
Hyacinthus, 441.

ICELAND, literature of, 287.
Icelandic, 287.
Idas and Lynkeus, 493.
Identification and comparison, 448.
Ihering, Rudolf von, 533 *note*.
Illyrian languages, 293.
Images, 359.
Imitatio Christi, the, 539.
Imitations, might they have been the origins of language? 208 *note*.
Ina, in Polynesia, 460.
Inca, philosopher, 349.
Incas, the, 345.
India, etymological definitions in, 30.
— the birthplace of religion, 78.
— and Persia, languages of, 294.
— language of, in third century B.C., 298, 299.
Indian vernaculars, 301.
Indian vernaculars, Western and Eastern divisions, 301.
Indic Class, 295.
Individual religions, 552.
— do not really exist, 557.
Indo-European family, 283.
Indra, 101, 167.
— indu, raindrops, 454.
Inductive sciences, 277.
Inexpressible thoughts, 355.
Infinite, the, of Schleiermacher, 57.
— love of the, 81 *note*.
— implied by finite, 122, 125.
— Descartes on the, 123.
— in space, 123.
— in time, 124.
— as cause, 124.
— savages without a word for, 125.
— Beings, 129.
— early names of the, 131.
— germs in the Veda of the, 137.
— and finite, inseparable, 139, 149.
— perception of the, 129, 134, 140, 145, 149, 218.
— *per se*, the 141, 145, 149.
— sensuous pressure of the, 141.
— pure concept of the, 141.
— in Nature, in Man, and in the Self, 141.
— in man as an object, 155.
— perception of the, led to religious ideas, 149.
— behind man, 156.
— in man as a subject, 160.
— the, 195.
— agents, 195.
— as palpable as the finite, 196 *note*.
— craving for the, 250.
— behind the finite, 384.
Inflectional Stage, 320.
Ino Leucothea, 460.
In petto, 354.
Inscriptions of Asoka, 300.
— of Cyrus, 302.
— of Assyria and Babylon, 304.
— of King Mesha, 307.
— of Zabad, 308.
— of Harran, 308.
— Himyaritic, 309.

Inscriptions in ancient Ethiopic, 309.
Intangible objects, 150, 153.
Intellectism, 391.
Intelligere, 33.
Interjectional theory, 363.
Interjections and imitations, the origin of language, 206.
— not of real language, 208.
Intuition as the foundation of religious knowledge, 228, 229.
Intuitions and concepts, 119, 143.
Invention of a religion impossible, 553.
Inwyt, 180.
Ionic dialect, 292.
Ἰουδαϊσμός, 42.
Iranic Class, 302.
Irish, 290.
Istar and Tammuz, 525.
— Sayce's translation of poem, 526.
— myth of, 528 *note*.
Îsvara, Supreme Lord, 98, 101 *note*, 230.
Italian, earliest writings in, 291.
— a vulgar dialect of Latin, 298.
Italic, 291.
Italy, religion and mythology of, 292.

JADE at Hissarlik, 202.
Jahve-Zebaoth, 453 *note*.
Japan, Buddhism in, merely formal, 339.
Jehovah, Semitic, 496.
— Assyrian, 453.
Jewish religion, 275, 553.
Jews, early familiar with the art of writing, 560.
Job, book of, 556.
John the Divine, 45.
Jordan, H., 473 *note*, 474 *note*.
Judaism and Christianity, as different from all other religions, 51.
— hardly a religion at first, 89.
— a Semitic religion, 548.
— Palestine the home of true, 548.
Judaismus, 42.
Julien, Stanislas, 322 *note*.
Jumala, an embodied being, 401.
Jupiter, 130, 410.
— a fetish, 158.
Jupiter Pluvius, 167.
— Fulgurator, 167.
— Fulminator, 167.
— Tonans, 167.
— Juno, etc., nothing but names, 462.
Ju-piter for Dyu-piter, 289.
Jutes, 286.

KAFIRS, belief of, 86, 341.
*K*aitanya, system of, 100.
Kalevala, 249, 334, 335.
— prayers from the, 401, 402.
Kalewipoeg, the, 336.
Kant, 60, 239, 253.
— on sensations, 118.
— on concepts and intuitions, 119, 143.
Kant's definition of religion, 189.
— category of causality, 250.
— view of evolution, 259, 268.
— on the Chimpanzee, 266.
Kapardin and kshayadvîra, names for Rudra, 490.
Kapila's three kinds of evidence, 229.
Karma, work, 111, 112, 112 *note*, 113, 190.
Καρπός, 451.
Kâth*a*ka, Kauthuma and Taittirîyaka, 235.
*K*âturmâsya sacrifice at the rainy season, 525.
Keary, 481 *note*.
Kellgren, 249 *note*.
Ken's morning hymn, 569.
Kerberos, 453.
Khoi-Khoi, belief of the, 86.
Khorda-Avesta, 544.
Khosa Kafirs, 86.
*Kh*un-*kh*in, 547.
Kikat*a*s, the, 234.
King, the five Chinese classics, 202 B.C., 546.
Kinyras, its derivation, 532 *note*.
Kitchen-midden, 217.
Know, to, 71.
Knowledge, 69 *note*.
— or feeling, 55.
— as religion, 69, 70.
— of what it consists, 115.

Knowledge, the gates of, 194.
Kolarian or Munda dialects, 336, 337.
Kols, dialect of the, 336.
Koran, 214, 215. See Qur'ân.
Kosala and Khemâ, 108, 109.
Krishna, 97, 98, 99 *note*, 231.
Ks and *s* in Greek, 42 *note*.
Kshatriyas, or nobility, 542.
Kshubh, 42 *note*.
Kung Yung, the, 547.
Kural, the, 539.

LABIALS and dentals in the Dénée Dindjié language, 210, 210 *note*.
Lactantius, 33, 34.
Lamarck, 261.
Lang, H., definition of religion, 81 *note*.
Language and thought, absolute identity of, 24.
— no percept without, 120.
— of the cuneiform inscriptions, 203.
— of children, 207.
— real, has no trace of imitative sounds, 208.
— is conceptual, not perceptual, 211.
— Plato on, 237.
— Rousseau on, 237 *note*.
— origin of, 237.
— Herder on, 264.
— the Rubicon, not passed by animals, 273.
— a material for the study of Natural Religion 280, 281.
— unity of, in India and England, 283.
— religion and nationality, intimate relationship between, 313 *note*.
— and religion, 338.
— wonder of, 351.
— is not thought *plus* sound, 356.
— conceptual foundation of, 378.
— dramatic or dynamic stratum of, 390, 391.
— growth of, 404.
Language and thought, one and indivisible, 406.
— Science of, 13, 21, 22, 25, 70, 282.
Languages, survey of, 282.
— morphological classification of, 313.
— three stages of, 319, 320.
— Monosyllabic or isolating, 319.
— Agglutinative, 320.
— Amalgamating or organic, 320.
Laomedon, city of, destroyed by Herakles, 493.
Lao-tse or Lao-ïze, 544, 556.
— system of, 215.
— seventy-two years old when born, 545.
— religion of, 553.
Laplace, 239.
Lark, 468.
Latin, 291.
— the lingua vulgaris of Europe, 291.
— twice influenced English, 291.
— borrowed much from Greek, 292.
— more like Celtic than Greek, 292.
— features in common with Greek, 294.
Law, the parent's word, 173.
— Prophets and Hagiographa, 548.
Lecturers and lectures, Lord Gifford's views on, 6, 7, 14.
Lectures, subjects of these, 14.
Lĕgere, lĕgio, 34.
Leipzig, University of, 16, 17.
Leminkainen substituted for Kauko, 494.
Leo, Prof., on Odin, 488.
Lepsius, Nubische Grammatik, 341, 342, 343.
Lersch, 30 *note*.
Letters, inherent meaning of certain, 375.
Lettic, 293.
Lettish, 293.
— literature, 293.
Libyan language, 340.
Lictor, ligare, ligere, 35.
Liebrecht on the likeness of Votan and Odinn, 457, 458.
Liechtenstein on Kafir belief, 86.

Light, tremor becoming a sensation of, 117.
— as a manifestation of God, 434.
Lightning as an active agent, 389.
Li-*ki*, the, 547.
Lippert, 158 *note*.
Literature fixes one dialect out of many, 297.
Lithuanian, 293.
— literature, 293.
Littré, 41 *note*.
Local adverbs before declensions, 242.
Logic of facts and history, 241.
Logos, 25, 46.
Lohitic languages, 337.
Lönnrot, 335.
— his Kalevala, 494.
Lord, 437.
Lorimer on conscience, 182 *note*.
Lorinser, Dr., Bhagavadgîtâ, 97 *note*.
Lotze, 16, 64.
Low German, 286, 289, 290.
— Franconian, 287.
Loxias, derived by Fröhde from laksh, 490 *note*.
Λοξίας and Λοξώ, 490.
Lubbock, Sir J., on tribes without religion, 85.
— Roskoff's reply to, 189.
— on the Californians, 255.
Lucretius' etymologies, 30.
Ludwig on the meaning of Naika-sâkha, 234.
Lun Yü, the, 547.
Lyall, 239.

McLEAN, Rev. J., 349 *note*, 565 *note*.
Macrobius on the Adonis feast, 530.
Magadha, 234.
Mâgadhî, 299.
Magnûn, a madman, 555.
Mahâbhârata, 235, 541.
Mahârâshṭrî, 301.
Mahâvîra, son of Siddhârtha of Kunda-grâma, founder of Gainism, 543.
Maine, Sir H., on law, 173.
Malabari's translation of Hibbert Lectures, 94.
Malade, malato, enfermo, 317.
Malay, 347.
— religions, 348.
Mallery, Sign Language, 359 *note*.
Malta, Arabic dialect in, 308.
Mâluṅkya and Buddha, 105.
Man, the infinite in, 155, 160.
— the something behind, 155.
— the infinite behind, 156.
— as manifestation of the infinite, 164.
— originally perfect or a savage, 200.
— not satisfied with mere perceptions, 244.
— Herder's views on, 261, 262.
— the brother of the animals, 263.
— possessed of a Haltia, 401.
Mana, 132.
Mânavas, 535.
Mandaeans, 306.
Manito, 133, 510, 511.
— means Beyond, 512.
— one of many names for the Infinite, 512.
— the Great, 513.
— introduced by missionaries, in a personal sense, 513.
Mantras, collections of sacred poetry, 540.
Manu, 173, 221.
— Law Book of, 301.
— Laws of, 535.
— mere rifacimenti of older books, 536.
— Bühler on the, 536 *note*.
Manx, 290.
Many gods, before one god, 128.
MAR, to rub, 377.
Marâṭhî, 301.
Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, 43.
Mars, 171.
Marsh, G. P., 84 *note*.
Martineau, his Divine Mind, or Will, 57, 62.
— on *Zweckmässig*, 91 *note*.
— on Ethics, 170.
— Study of Religion, 256 *note*.

Maru, Polynesian and Vedic Maruts, 459.
Maruts, 453.
Mâs, from root MÂ, 407 *note*.
Masurius Sabinus, 36.
Material objects, worship of, 128.
— form names for the gods, 131.
Materies, 240.
Matter as something vile, 118.
Matthews on the Great Spirit, 402.
Matû, or Martu, the Storm-wind, 460.
Mayas, the, 345.
Media and Persia, 543.
Mehlis, Dr., on Hermes, 480.
Melanesian, 347, 348.
Melikertes, Melkarth in Greece, 457.
Men and women turning into plants, 440.
Menander, 177.
— on Conscience, 182.
Mencius, the works of, 547.
Mens, temple to, 176.
Mental life and spirit, 162.
Mente et ratione instruere, 391.
Mere concept, 384.
Mere names, 383, 384.
Metus, 37.
Metus deorum, 37.
Mexico, religion of, 344.
Milinda, King, and Nâgasena, 107.
Milinda-panha, the, 106.
Mill, 29 *note*, 65.
— on Religion, 65.
Mimetic theory, 363.
Mincopies, the, 347.
Minister, 31.
Missionary enterprise, 504.
Mithra-Ahura, 499.
Mitra and Savitri, 478.
Mitre, the, 272.
Moabites, 307.
Modern problems to be traced back, 239.
Modus cognoscendi et colendi Deum, 53, 188, 189.
Mohammed, 554.
— could neither read nor write, 561.
Mohammedan religion, spread of, 78.
Mohammedanism, 549, 553.
Mohawk in Oxford, 314.
— language, 515.
Μοῖρα or Αἶσα, 472.
Moirae, the, 481.
Monboddo, Lord, 265.
Mongolic Class, 328, 329.
— few dialects, 331.
Mongols, conquests of the, 330.
Monkeys greeting sunrise, 69 *note*.
Monosyllabic or isolating languages, 319.
Monotheism, 213.
Monstra, 39.
Moon, eclipse of, 37.
— as a measurer, 407.
Moral feelings in religion, 64.
— action, Fichte on, 172.
— character, not affected by some religions, 196 *note*.
— germs, 433.
Morality, early, 172.
Morgan, on American Aborigines, 507.
Morley, J., on the historical spirit, 279.
Morphological classification of languages, 313.
— classification, 319.
— and genealogical classifications cannot run parallel, 321.
— similarity, no proof of relationship, 321.
Morus, M., letter to Descartes, 71 *note*.
Moses, 556.
— did not consign the Old Testament to writing, 560.
Motu dialect, 347.
Mountains, 151.
Muir, 246 *note*, 566 *note*.
Müller, Otfried, 268.
— on mythological names, 461 *note*.
— Johannes, 269.
— F., 341.
Munda or Kol languages, 336.
Mutlum, 413.
Μυστήριον, 413.
Mystics, mediaeval, 49.

Myth, 411.
— at first a word, 414.
Mythical theology, 45.
Mythological names, 'des circonstances atténuantes,' 428.
Mythology, 21.
— an inevitable phase in development, 22, 518.
— Science of, 22, 25.
— a kind of disease, 22.
— not yet religion, 168.
— a material for the study of Natural Religion, 280.
— Vedic and Teutonic, 288.
— elements whence spring, 314.
— first formation of, 389.
— Science of, founded on the Science of Language, 392.
— meaning of, in Greek, 411, 412.
— universal, 417.
— what is Comparative? 417.
— why it deserves such careful study, 517.
— a metamorphic stratum, 518.
— Comparative, 47, 417, 423.
— A. Barth on, 424.
— Etymological School, 426.
— Analogical School, 426.
— Psychological School, 427.
— Ethno-psychological School, 427.
Μῦθος, 412.
— means word, not deed, 413.
Myths agreeing in one and differing in other names, 492.

NÂGASENA and King Milinda, 107.
Naikasâkha, 234.
Naked concepts, arrayed in verbal uniforms, 355.
Names, 115, 116.
— accidental similarities of, 454.
Naming, 162, 371.
Narcissus, 442.
National and individual religions, 552.
Natural and historical sciences, 12, 13.
Natural history, 258, 259.
Natural Religion, 278, 296.
— the author of, 64.
— simplified form of, 196.
— historical argument for, 198.
— materials for study of, 280.
Natural Selection, 226, 227.
Natural Theology, 52, 53.
— Lord Gifford's definition of, 5, 10.
Naturbeseelung, 157.
Nature, the infinite in, 150, 154.
— as manifestation of the infinite, 164.
— the signs of, interpreted in a religious sense in Old Testament, 171.
Naturforscher, 91.
Nauseous, 116.
Navaho dialect, 209.
Nebuchadnezzar, bricks of, 316.
Necopinus, 35.
Negative, the infinite *per se*, as a mere, 149.
Neglegere, negligere, 35.
Neglego, negligo, 35 *note*.
Negroes, 342.
— and fetishism, 159.
Neo-Syriac dialects, 307.
Nepâli, 301.
Nestorian Inscription, 93.
— Christians, 307.
Netram, eye, from ni, 368.
New Guinea, dialects of, 347.
— religions of, 347.
Newman, 63.
New Testament, 9, 214, 215, 561.
— Parables of the, traced to the Talmud, 555.
New Zealander and letter, 550.
Nicaea, Council of, 8.
Niebuhr, Greek in Italian, 84.
— and the historical school, 268.
Nigantha Nâta-putta, 543.
Nightingale, real note of the, 362.
Nigidius Figulus, 35, 35 *note*.
Nihil est in fide quod non ante fuerit in sensu, 115, 195.
Nihil est in intellectu quod non simul fuerit in lingua, 71, 71 *note*.
Nil admirari, 283.

Nineteenth century, age of progress, 7.
Nis or nakta changed into νύξ, 446.
Nis, Νύξ, Nox, 448.
Nishkriya, 98 *note*.
Nitzsch, 34 *note*.
No in Syrianian means yes, 362.
— in Irish is naicc and aicc, 362.
Nobbe, 16.
Nóiré's theory of the origin of expressive sounds, 211, 362, 386.
— real merit, 374.
Nöldeke on Semitic languages, 310 *note*.
Nomina and cognomina, 476.
Normans in England, their blood and speech, 291.
Northern zone of African languages, 342.
Norwegian, 287.
Nothing of Buddhism, the, 190.
Noumenal, 72.
Nubahs, the, 341.
Nutar, god in Egyptian, 394.
— Le Page Renouf on, 394.
— strong power, 395.
— compared with Hebrew El, 395.
Nymphs, 154.

OBEDIENCE as religion, 66.
Objective as distinguished from the subjective world, 389.
Obligatio, obligio, 35.
Obsolete names, 430.
Oceanic languages, 347.
Oculus, 368.
Odin, 488.
— his daughter Saga, 489.
Oðinn, 454 *note*.
Odysseus, 137.
— name of, 468.
Οἶδα and ἴσμεν, 285.
Oken, school of, 264, 268.
Oldenberg, Professor, 105 *note*, 112 *note*.
Oldham, on Himalayan hill tribes, 502.
Old Saxon, 203.
Old Testament, 9, 12, 214, 215.
Old Testament, religious aspect of the signs of nature in, 171.
— idea of writing familiar in the, 560.
Olympus of unseen deities, 162.
Onomatopoetic theory, 363.
Ontological arguments, 198, 240, 252.
Open Court, definitions of religion in the, 43.
Opinari, opinio, opinatio, 35.
Oral tradition, Vedic Sanskrit preserved only by, 297.
Orang-utan race, 347.
'Origin of Species,' Darwin's, 258.
— excitement caused by, 258, 260.
Ormazd, 495, 496.
— shows traces of material conception, 498.
Oronyhateka, 515.
Orpheus, 45.
Oscan, 291.
Osiris, a Sun-god, 531.
— was slain and rose again, 531.
Ossetian, 303.
Ouranos and Dyaus, 501.
Ovid's etymologies, 30.

PALAEOLITHIC Man, 208, 208 *note*.
— words, antithetic meaning of, 209.
Pâli, or Mâgadhî, 299, 301.
Pâṇini, grammar of, 296, 297, 298, 300.
— his language not Vedic Sanskrit, 298.
— his rules never infringed, 298, 299.
— his Sanskrit used generally, 300, 301.
Panjâbî, 301.
Pantomimes, 358.
Paramâtmâ, the Highest Self, 576.
Parganya, 167.
Parrot never speaks Parrotese, 361.
PAS, 204.
Pastor, le Pasteur, 317.
Paśubandha sacrifice at the rains, 525.
Patagonians, 346.

Pater, not a masculine, 408.
Patteson, Bishop, 515.
Peacock, Argos changed into a, 409.
Peguans, language of the, 337.
Pehlevi, 302.
— literature, 302, extinct 900 A.D., 303.
Pen, use of, taught by the Lord, 562.
Perception, 162.
Perceptions impossible without names, 359.
Percepts, 115, 116, 121.
— Helmholtz on, 121.
— always finite, 121, 122.
— the beginning of all knowledge, 127.
— first, then concepts, 129.
Periwig, perruque, 272 *note*.
Permic Class, 334.
Persian, modern, 303.
Person, the, 576.
Personal life, what it means, 391.
Personification, 212, 213, 392.
— true key to, 391.
Peru, its religion, 345.
Peshito or Syriac translation of the Old and New Testaments, 307.
Petitot, Father, 210.
Pfleiderer's World-controlling Power, 57, 61.
— criticism, 193.
— quoted, 253 *note*.
Φ, sound of wind heard in, 376.
Φαγ, 436.
Φαγόντες, teeth, 437.
Phenician, 307.
Phenicians, 533.
— in Korinth, 457.
Phenomenal, 72.
— and non-phenomenal, 250.
Philistines, 307.
Philology, Etymological School, 419.
— Analogical School, 419.
— Dialectic School, 420.
— Psychological School, 422.
— Ethno-psychological School, 423.
Philosopher, 90.
Philosophical instruments, 91.
— mythology, 164.
Philosophie, 91.
Philosophy, a perpetual criticism, 27.
— of Religion, 198.
φόβος θεοῦ, 64.
Phoebos Apollon, 479.
Phoenicia, the birthplace of religion, 78.
Φοῖβος = Bhava, 465.
Phonetic corruption, 419.
— law, never tamper with a, 428.
Physical theology, 45.
— meaning in the names of the gods, 130.
— religion, 164, 574.
— phenomena, moral influence of, 169, 172.
Pictographs of Indians, Mallery on, 513 *note*.
Pietas, temple to, 176.
Pilgrim's Progress, 539.
Pitâ, 130.
Pithecanthropos, 207, 244.
Piyadasi, inscriptions of, 298.
— language of, 298.
Plato, 44, 45.
— on language, 237.
Plato's etymologies, 29.
— Cratylus, meaning of certain letters, 375.
πλόη or *εὔπλοη*, pull away, 84.
Plush, 272 *note*.
Plutarch on religion, 88.
— on Agnoia, 225.
Pluvius, Jupiter, 167.
Pococke, 318 *note*.
Polish, 293.
— literature, 293.
Political History, 259.
Polynesian religion, 89 *note*.
— mythology, 132.
— languages, 347, 348.
Polynesians wink instead of speaking, 357.
Polytheism, 213.
Pooh-pooh theory, 206, 207, 362, 373.
Popol Vuh, the, 345.
Portenta, 39.
Portuguese, earliest writings in, 291.

Positivist definitions of religion, 73.
— objections, 141.
— point of view, 143.
Pott, 278.
— on cheap scepticism, 439.
Pottery, wheel, at Hissarlik, 202.
Powell, J. W., Mythology, 494 *note*, 506, 507.
Practical man, the, 2.
— religion, 46, 47.
— theology, 46, 47.
Praeneste, oracle at, 474.
Prâkrit dialects, 299, 300, 301.
— classical, 301.
Pramaganda, 234.
Prathama, primus and fruma, Gothic, 421.
Prâtisâkhyas, or phonetic treatises, 297.
Pratyag-âtmâ, the Self behind, 576.
Prayers, 184, at sunrise, sunset, and midday, 520.
Preconceived ideas, 86.
Preller, 474 *note*.
— on cerfus (*sardha*), 450.
Prichard, 268.
— his classification, 324.
Priest, 31.
Priester-wirthschaft, 18.
Priesthood, 183.
Priest's office vicarious, 183.
Primogenia, name for Fors, 473.
Proctor, R. A., 138 *note*.
Progress not excluded by revelation, 9.
Prometheus, Sk. pramantha, 390, 453.
Proto-Aryan form of speech, 203.
Protoplasm, 265.
Provençal, earliest works in, 291.
Prussian, Old, 293.
— literature, 293.
Ψ, sound of wind heard in, 376
Psychological religion, 164, 576.
— moral influence of, 176.
— deities in Rome, 176.
— — in Greece, 177.
— School of Mythology, 427, 503, 576.
— School of Philology, 422.
Ptolemaic system, 254.
Pudicitia, temple to, 176.
Puer, Puella, gender of, 408.
Punjab, the, 137.
Purâṇas, the, 301, 541.
Pythagoras and Plato on the imitation of God, 56 *note*.

QUATREFAGES on the religion of savages, 85.
Quiché language, 345.
Qur'ân, 12.
— language of the, 308.
— or the lecture, 562.
— authorised edition of, 562.
— not collected during the prophet's life, 562.

R, Plato on the letter, 375.
Râ, the Sun-god, 249, 459.
— of Mangaia, 459.
Radical concepts, 274 *note*.
Radical stage, 319.
Rae, Mr. John, 567.
Raghuvaṁsa, 235.
Rain, prayers for, 168.
— Athenian prayer for, 171.
Rainer, not yet rain, 405.
Rains, it, 163.
Rajendralal Mitra, 100 *note*.
Râjmahals, dialect of the, 336.
Râmâyaṇa, 235, 541.
Raymundus de Sabunde, 52.
Reason, 162, 163.
— worded and unworded, 352.
Rebellare, rebellis, rebellio, 35.
Red, sensation of, 118.
Red Indians, and the Supreme Being, 133, 134.
— religion of the, 216, 344.
Reformers, the, 275.
Religare, 35.
Religatio, 35.
Religens, religiosus, 35.
Religio, religare, relegere, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38.
— jurisjurandi, 37.
— Romana, 40.
Religio, 38, 39, 40, 42.
— etymological definition of, 33–36.

Religio, historical definition of, 36–41, 43, 44.
— dogmatic definitions of, 37, 43.
— later meanings of, 41–43.
Religion, stationary, 7.
— changes in, 8.
— retrogression in, 8.
— essential elements of, 8.
— a philosophy of, 20.
— definition of, why wanted, 27.
— differences in defining, 28.
— what is meant by, 27.
— and superstition, 38.
— in Old and New Testament, 41, 42.
— random definitions of, 43.
— and Theology, 44, 45, 46.
— dogmatic, practical, and comparative, 46, 47, 60.
— Schleiermacher's definition of, 47.
— belief or body of doctrines, 49.
— object of, must be defined, 56.
— Caird's definition of, 57, 60, 61.
— Theoretical, 63.
— as sentiment or knowledge, 64.
— views of Author of Natural Religion, 65; of Goethe, 65; of Mill, 65; of Spinoza, 66, 67; of the Brâhmans, 67; of Schleiermacher, 67; of Hegel, 69; of Fichte, 69.
— aesthetic and moral feelings in, 64.
— as obedience, 66.
— as dependence, 68.
— as freedom, 69.
— as knowledge. 69.
— Positivist definitions of, 73.
— selfishness, the source of, 74.
— Gruppe's definition, 76.
— vanity a source of, 76.
— Gruppe's three causes of the spread of, 76.
— Phoenicia or India the birthplaces of, 78.
— the discovery of one man, and he a fool, 79.
— Gruppe's theory, 78, 79, 80.
— universality of, 81.
— definition of, by Strauss, 81 *note*.
— by H. Lang, 81 *note*.
— by M. M., 188.
Religion, definition of, by D. Thompson, 81 *note*.
— of savages, 85, 86, 189.
— Cicero on, 88.
— Plutarch on, 88.
— names for, 90.
— no word for, in Sanskrit, 92.
— words for, in Chinese, 92.
— words for, in Arabic, 93.
— an experience, 114.
— began with simple perceptions, not with abstract concepts, 141, 142.
— Physical, Anthropological, and Psychological, 164.
— and science, 166.
— natural phenomena explained by, 167.
— author's definition of, 188, 193.
— the surrender of the finite will to the infinite, 189.
— a psychological necessity, 194.
— experience, the origin of, 195.
— traced back to one proximum genus, 196.
— theorist's view of the science of, 212.
— lives in hearts, not in books, 215.
— origin of, 219.
— is it possible? 221.
— traces of, everywhere, 221, 222.
— simple beginnings of, 237.
— necessity of an historical study of, 274.
— and mythology must be studied in the languages whence they sprang, 313, 313 *note*.
— and language, 338.
— Science of, founded on the Science of Language, 392.
Religion, French, 41.
Religiones, 38.
Religions, natural and revealed, 51.
— five definitions include all, 89.
— Semitic, 214.
— Aryan, 214.
— of China, 215.
— without books, 215.
— value of the study of, 222, 223.
— must change, 275.

Religions, none produced in Europe, 295.
— Science of, 11, 25, 53, 212.
— — chairs for the study of the, 11, 12.
— — a natural science, 12.
Religiöse Stimmung, 67.
Religiosi, relĕgere, 33, 34, 35.
Religiosität, 49.
Religiosum, relinquere, 36.
Religiosus, 41.
Religious thought, beginning of, 130, 141.
— meaning of, 168, 169.
— knowledge, Hibbert Lectures on, 194.
— experience begins with the senses, 195.
— map shows violent convulsions, 216.
— problems in their simplest forms, 236, 237.
Remembering former states of existence, 113.
Remorse, remors, remorsus, 180.
Renan, 317 *note*.
Renenet, the Egyptian goddess Fortuna, 474.
Renouf, Le Page, 225 *note*, 249 *note*.
— on the word nutar, 394.
Revealed religions, 51.
Revelation does not exclude progress, 9.
— human element in, 9.
— possibility of, 233.
— what has been unfolded, 236.
Reverence, as religion, 65.
Réville, M., 12, 256 *note*, 453 *note*.
Revised Version, 42.
Rhys Davids, 105 *note*.
Rhŷs, Professor, 151 *note*, 225 *note*, 291. 484.
Rig-veda, M. M.'s edition of, 19, 20.
— the, 101, 131, 144.
— age of the, 184, 244.
— not sacrificial, 185.
Ṛishi, the, a seer, not a maker, 229.
Ṛishis of the Veda, 217.
Rivers, 152.
Road, what we ride on, 368.
Romanes, his work on Mutual Evolution in Man, 274 *note*.
Romanic language in England, 291.
Rome, literary language of, 291.
Roots, 204, 205, 207, 319, 365, 385.
— are conceptual, 208.
— are ultimate facts, 210.
— number of Sanskrit, 274 *note*.
— number admitted by Sanskrit grammarians, 365.
— about 800, 365.
— in English, number of, 365.
— — words derived from conceptual, 367.
— of language express the common acts of man, 373.
— express our acts, 386.
— geographical distribution of, 450.
Roscher, Dr., on Apollon and Mars, 477.
Roscoe, Sir H., 139.
Rosen, 18.
Roskoff, 255, 267 *note*.
— on the religion of savages, 85, 189.
— answer to Sir J. Lubbock, 216.
Roth, Professor, 23.
— derivation of Vesta, 450.
Round, to, 413 *note*.
Rousseau on language, 237 *note*.
Rub, to, 366.
Rückert, 17.
— his Dravidian lectures, 325 *note*.
Rudra, 488, 489.
— other names for, 490.
— Śiva a development of, 491.
Rumor, 413 *note*.
Rûna, Gothic, 413, 413 *note*.
Russian, 293.

Σ, sound of wind heard in, 376.
Sabaean civilisation, 309.
Sacra, 38, 39.
Sacred Books of the East, 18, 23, 24, 217, 311.
Sacred books, 295, 296, 301.
— religions with or without, 214.
— lessons to be learnt from, 218.

Sacred books, as materials for the study of Natural Religion, 281.
— represent the oldest language, 295.
— what is a? 538.
— five birthplaces of the, 539.
— never written by the founders of religion, 557.
— become a fetish, 564.
Sacrifices, 169, 182, 184, 186.
— in the Veda, 134, 184, 185, 186, 525.
— arose from carousals, 186.
Saga, daughter of Odin, 489.
Sagas of Iceland, 287.
St. Augustin, 34.
St. Petersburg, Imperial Academy of, 19.
Samaritans, 306.
Samâsa (διασκευή) identified with Ὅμηρος, 463.
Sâma-veda, 185.
Samayâkârika-sûtras, 536.
Samoans and Sarawakians believe that men can become trees, 441.
Samoyede woman's prayer, 568.
Samoyedes and Ostjakes, worship among, 400.
Samoyedic, 326, 328.
Sândilya, 99 *note*, 100, 101 *note*.
Sânkhya-sûtras, 229.
Sanskrit, no word for religion in, 92.
— accent in Vedic, 285.
— of the Vedic Hymns, 284, 296, 298, 299.
— of the Brâhmanas, 296.
— of the Sûtras, 296, 297.
— classical, 296, 301.
— of Pânini, 297, 299.
— stationary ever since, 298.
— Brahmanic, 299.
— Buddhist, 299.
— mixed, 299.
— plays, 300.
— literature, 300.
— renaissance of, 300.
Santa Theresa, 233.
Santhals, dialect of the, 336.
SAR in Finno-Ugric, 378.
Sarad and Ceres, 449.
Saramâ and Helena, 464.
Sârameya, 453.
— son of Saramâ, 482.
Saranyu, 433.
Sar-it, river, 281.
Sarvarî, the night, 453.
Sassanian dynasty, 302.
Sat, the, the real, 249.
Saussure, de, Le latin est fort chiche de ses a_2, 476 *note*.
Savage races, do not carry us further back than civilised nations, 133.
— the, 200.
Savages, 133, 212.
— without words for finite and infinite, 125.
— nineteenth century, as antediluvians, 134.
— two sorts of, 200.
— and barbarians unknown to the student of religion, 349.
Savigny, 268.
Saxon, 203, 286.
Sâyana's commentary, 20.
Sayce, Prof., 167 *note*, 225 *note*.
— his translation of the poem of Istar and Tammuz, 526.
Scandinavian, 286, 287.
— gods, 454 *note*.
Schelling, 17, 220, 264.
Schenkel, 63.
Scherer, W., on J. Grimm, 486 *note*.
Schiller's meaning of religion, 40.
Schleiermacher, 67, 69, 70, 103, 141.
Schleiermacher's definition of religion, 47.
— explanation of religious sentiment, 48.
— Infinite, 57.
Schliemann at Hissarlik, 201.
Schopenhauer, 18, 119.
Schrader, 453 *note*.
Schroeder, Dr. L. von, 457 *note*.
Science derived from religion, 167.
Science of Language, 13, 21, 25, 70, 282.
— the foundation of the Sciences of Mythology and Religion, 392.
Science of Mythology, 22, 25.
Science of Religion, 13, 25, 46, 53.

Science of Religion, chairs for the study of the, 11, 12.
— a natural science, 12, 13.
— theorist's view, 212.
Science of Thought, 25, 70.
Scotland, philosophy of religion in, 198.
Scots Magazine, objections in, 196 *note.*
Scythian family, 325.
σέβας, 42 *note.*
Seeing, what it is, 117.
Seelenculte, 158.
Selection requires one who selects, 227.
Self, the, 160, 164, 576.
Selfishness, the source of religion, 74.
Semi-tangible objects, 150.
Semitic family, 304, 311, 380.
— three branches of the, 304.
— Northern and Southern, 304.
— phonetic character, 310.
— Nöldeke's account of, 310 *note.*
— less liable to mythology than the Aryan, 314.
— religions, 214.
— languages, 315, 325.
— language of Carthage, 340.
— names for God, 396.
— Bel or Baal, 455.
Seneca, 56.
— on rivers, 154.
Sensation, 162.
— and perception inexplicable, 116, 117.
Sensations, 115–120.
— Kant on, 118.
Sense, Imagination, Intellect, Language, 162.
Senses, the beginning of religious experience, 195.
Sensuous perception, 230.
Sensus numinis, 72.
Sentence, every word originally a, 281.
Sentiment of the Infinite, 68.
Serpent, 367.
Servian, 293.
Settle and saddle, 368.
Seven Rivers, 137.
Sexual selection, 267.
Shâhnâmeh, the, of Firdusi, 303.
Shakespeare, number of words used by, 83.
Shamanism, 349.
Shame, 179.
— effect of, on coloured races, 179 *note.*
Shi-king, 546.
Shintoism, 339.
Shû, the four, 547.
Shû-king, the, 546.
Siamese, 337.
Sibyl, interpreters of the, 39.
Sibyllae, 38 *note.*
Siddhânta, 542.
Silurians, 275.
Simon, M., on the Chinese social system, 173.
Sindhi, 301.
Sister dialects of old classical languages, 298.
Sîtâ, the furrow, 451.
Śiva, a development of Rudra, 491.
Slaves, 293.
Slavonic or Windic, 292.
— South-East, 293.
— South-West, 293.
Slovenian, 293.
Small, the infinitely, 139.
Smṛiti, 96.
Snow, Captain, on the Tierra del Fuegians, 83.
Socrates, 221.
— and the *δαιμόνιον*, 170.
— on the meaning of certain letters, 376.
Soil, tillers of the, 200.
Solar bird, the, 145, 148.
— myth, 487.
Solarism, 349.
Sollennis, 523.
Soma, 135, 136.
— the Vedic and the Old Norse Sôn, 463.
Somâli dialect, 340.
Somebody curing and sending diseases, Aryan concept of, 489.
Son, from root su, 367.

Soul, what is it? 161.
Sounds, involuntary and voluntary, 361.
South-East Slavonic, 293.
Southern zone of African languages, 342.
Space, the infinite in, 123.
Spanish, earliest writings in, 291.
Sparrmann, 86.
Spata and Mykenai, pottery, 202.
Spencer, Herbert, on Helios, 487.
Spinoza, 40, 66, 161.
— Lord Gifford's study of, 3, 4.
— called an atheist, 228.
Spirit, spiritus, 162.
— or shade, 403.
Spirits of heaven, 300, 397.
— of earth, 600, 397.
Śraddhâ, faith, 101.
— its derivation, 102.
— and credo, 102.
Śrauta-sûtras, 536.
Srishti or emanation, 247.
Śruti, 96, 236.
STA, to stand, 377.
Stages of development, 200.
Stahl's theory of an Anima Mundi, 392.
Stallbaum, 16.
Stanley, Dean, 270.
— on vestments, 270–272.
Statius quoted, 176 *note*.
Steps of perfection, 100.
Stoddart, 318 *note*.
Stokes, Whitley, on Yes in Irish, 362 *note*.
Stole, the, 272.
Stone, bronze and iron ages, 201.
Storm and gods, same word used for, 453 *note*.
Storm-god Ramnân, 453 *note*.
Strauss, definition of religion, 81 *note*.
Street, 84.
Strike, to, 366.
Subjective acts predicated of other agents, 387.
— predicated of objects, 388.
Sub-Semitic languages, 340.
Sufis, poetry of the, 49.
Sukhâvatî, 124.
Sumerian inscriptions, 325.
Sumero-Accadian, 304, 325 *note*.
Summa theologiae, 46.
Summanus, 415.
Sun, the, as a fighter, 187.
— from root su, 367.
— vital importance of the, 524.
Sun dance of the Blackfoots, 349.
συνείδησις, 177.
συνειδότες, 178.
Sunrise, a new life, 433.
Suomalainen or Fins, 334.
Superhuman beings, 130, 131.
— — belief in, 128.
— — connected with material objects, 128.
Supernatural, the, 115, 222.
— powers, 197.
— nothing so natural as the, 571.
Superstition, 42, 225.
— and religion, 38.
Supreme Being, 126, 131.
Surplice, the, 270.
Survival of the Fittest, 226.
Sûrya, sun, 128.
Sûtra, or third period of Sanskrit, 297.
Sûtras, 296, 297, 301, 536, 541.
— three classes of, 536.
Śvetâśvatara Upanishad, 98, 99, *note*.
Swanwick, Miss, 466 *note*.
Swedish, 287.
Σύμβολα, 534.
Synergastic theory, 374.
Synonymes, real, 317.
Syriac, 305, 306, 307.
— and Chaldee, 305, 306.

TA HSIO, the, 547.
Taic languages, 337.
Talmud, 306.
— the origin of many New Testament parables, 555.
Tamulic languages, 336.
TAN, 204.
Tangible, Semi-tangible, Intangible Objects, 150.

Tâo, meaning of, 547.
Taoism, 93.
Tâo-teh-king, the, 547, 556.
Tar, dhar, and dar, Sanskrit roots, 288.
Targums, the, 306.
Tatar or Mongolic races, 329.
Tataric, 330.
Techmer, 169 *note*.
Teichmüller, Religionsphilosophie, 54 *note*, 65 *note*, 73 *note*.
Telang, 231 *note*.
Teleological interpretations, 142.
— arguments, 198, 240, 251.
Telugu, vocalic harmony in, 326.
Temples to psychological deities, 176.
Ten Commandments of the Old Testament, 521.
Terminational Stage, 319.
Terrien Poncel, 318 *note*.
Tessera hospitalis, 534.
Teutonic stem, 203.
— class, 286.
— features in common with Latin, 294.
Thamudic inscriptions, 308.
Thar, dar, and tar, Gothic roots, 288.
Thebes, capital of Kadmos, 457.
Theia, 446.
Θεῖον γένος and δῖον γένος, 446.
Θεῖος, 446.
Θεός, derived from Θέειν, 446 *note*.
Themis, wife of Zeus, 521.
Θεμίστες, 173.
Theogonic elements, 148.
Theogony, 218.
— of the Aryan race, the Rig-veda as the, 184.
Θεοί. the gods, 29.
Theologi, Homer and Hesiod called, 45.
Theologia, 45.
— Naturalis sive Liber Creaturarum, 52 *note*.
Theologos, 45, 46.
Theology should be progressive, 11.
— and religion, 44.
— three kinds of, 45.
Theology of Thamyris, 45.
— meaning of, 46.
— comparative, 47, 52, 53.
— dogmatic and practical, 46, 47.
— natural, 52.
Theoretical religion, 63.
Theoretical School, 200, 203, 205, 207, 211, 214, 216, 219, 220.
Theory, History *versus*, 196.
Thinking of a dog, 353.
— in German or English, 354.
Θοίνη, same as Sanskrit dhena, 465.
Thompson, D., definition of religion, 81 *note*.
— on the infinite, 140 *note*.
Thorr, Icelandic god, 288.
Thought and Language, absolute identity of, 24.
— its beginning, 116.
— Science of, 25, 70.
Thought is language *minus* sound, 356.
Thoughts must be shown by outward signs, 357.
Thracian, or Aryan, 325.
Θρησκεία, 41.
Thrill of joy, 368.
Thunor, thunder, 288.
Thursday, dies Jovis, 288.
Tibetan language, 337.
Tiele, Prof., on the connection of religion and language, 313 *note*.
— on the myth of Istar, 528 *note*.
Tierra del Fuego, Darwin on, 82, 83.
— Captain Cook on the language, 82.
— Captain Snow on, 83.
— Giacomo Bovè on the language, 83, 84.
— the people of, 346.
Tigré dialect, 310.
Time, the infinite in, 124.
Timur, 331.
Tinné, or Athapascan language, 209.
— its radicals, 209.
Tolteks, in Mexico, 344.

Tonans, Jupiter, 167.
Ton-are, 288.
Tools used by primitive man, 200.
Totemism, 87, 159, 160, 349.
— a civil institution, 522.
Tractatus theologico-politicus of Spinoza, 40.
Transformationists, 143.
Transitions from one stage of language to another, 320.
Trees, 150.
Tremor becoming a sensation of light, 117.
Tripiṭaka, the, 215, 542.
— reduced to writing about 88 B.C., the canon closed 377 B.C., 542 *note*.
— not Buddha's work, 559.
Tri-sandhyâ, three daily prayers, 520.
Tritogeneia for Athene, 469.
Triton, lake where Athene was born, 469.
Tritonia, 443.
Troy destroyed by Herakles, 493.
Tse (tseu), meaning of, 322 *note*.
Tseu, father, 322 *note*.
Tsuni-Goam, 86 *note*.
Tud, to strike, 377.
Tuesday, Tîwes-dæg, 289.
Tulu dialect, 327, 327 *note*.
Tungusic, 328, 329.
Turanian languages, 324.
— North, 324.
— South, 324.
— of Babylon and Nineveh, 325.
— Allophylian, in place of, 325.
Turkish vowels, 326.
— grammar, 332.
Turkic Class, 328, 332.
Tus in acutus, cornutus, etc., 204, 205.
Tuscan or Roman used by the Amorosos in Italian comedies, 301.
Tvashṭâ dyâvâpṛithivyoḥ, carpenter of heaven and earth, 140.
Tvashṭar, 245.
Twenty, how formed, 421.
Two arms, two legs, 379.
Tylor on the religion of savages, 85, 86.
Tŷr and Tuesday, 288.
— Tŷsdagr, 289.

U, a derivative, 204.
Uddâlaka, 235.
Ugric languages, 320, 326, 333.
— Dr. Hunfalvy on, 320 *note*.
— Finno-, 333.
Ugro-Tataric languages, 324.
Ulfilas, Bible of, 286.
Umbrian, 291.
Unity of Nature, 126.
Unknowable, how can we know the, 224.
Unknown, perception of the, 218.
— God, 225, 225 *note*.
Unkulunkulu, 157, 173.
Upanishads, 18, 48, 97, 98, 99, 111, 163, 541, 576.
— M. M.'s first translation of the, 17, 18.
— later translation, 18 *note*.
— idea of devotion in, 99.
— no Christian influences in, 99.
— idea of work in the, 111.
— religion of the, 275.
Ural-Altaic languages, 324.
Uraon-Kols, dialect of the, 336.
Uriyâ, 301.
Urschleim, 265.
Urvarâ, the field, 451.
Ushas, the Dawn, 430, 434.
— mother of the cows, 431.
— mistress of the stable, 431.
— has no feet, 432.
— the never-dying, 432.
— the immortal, 432.

VÂ, to blow, 375, 376.
Vadh, Sk. to strike, 289.
Vadh-ar, thunderbolt, 289.
Van der Kamp, on Kafir belief, 86.
Vanity, a source of religion, 76.
Varro, 30 *note*, 34, 45.
Varuṇa and Indra, hymns to, 228, 229.
Varuṇa and Ormazd, 495, 497.

Varuṇa and Ormazd, shows his physical origin, 498.
Vasishṭha, 137.
Vasu, brilliant, 130.
Vasubandhu, council under, 543 *note*.
Vâyu, wind, 128.
Veda, 12, 18, 19, 96, 284, 296, 540.
— detritus on which it rests, 132.
— sacrifice in the, 134.
— deities of the, 134, 135.
— germs of the infinite in the, 137.
— end and endless in the, 146.
— sacrifices in, 184.
— compared to an oak, 185.
— appealed to as a proof that sacrifices come first in religion, 186.
— doubts as to the existence of the gods in the, 227.
— inspired, 233.
— of human origin, 235.
— preservation of, 296.
— language of the, 296.
— always the sacred language, 296.
— words and grammar of, unknown in later Sanskrit, 296.
— not written originally, 558.
Vedas, 215.
Vedânta philosophy, 48, 163, 164.
Vedic prayers, 172.
— Âryas, 217.
— poets our ancestors, 240.
— religion, 275.
— hymns, 295, 296, 301.
— — composed in the north-west of India, 296.
— — all in metre, 296.
— — each word, letter, and accent settled, 297.
— Sanskrit, three stages of, 297, 301.
— — a priestly literature, 297.
— — has passed through grammatical discipline, 297.
— — preserved by oral tradition only, 297.
— poems, God-given, 558.
Vendîdâd, 544.
— sâdah, 544.
Veneror, 42.
Venetian used by Pantaleone in Italian comedies, 301.
Venus, 171.
Vessel drifting from America to England, 346.
Vesta, derived by Curtius from vas, to shine, 450.
— — by Roth from vas, to dwell, 450.
Vestments, Stanley on, 270–272.
Vibration is sensation, 120.
Vigfusson on *fors* and *bera at*, 476 *n*.
Viginti, 421.
Vinaya-piṭaka, 300 *note*.
Virchow, and the Tierra del Fuegians, 83.
— on perceptions, 121.
— on the descent of man, 267.
— on perceptions and names, 359.
Vispered, the, 544.
Visṛishṭi, creation, 247.
Viśvakarman, 246.
Vocalic harmony, law of, 326.
Völkerpsychologie, 428, 503.
Votan, the serpent deity of Central America, 457.
— likeness to Odinn, 457, 458.
Vowels and consonants, significant, 209, 210.
— in Turkish are sharp and flat, 326.
Vulgate, the, 41, 42.
Vyâkaraṇa, its meaning, 204.

WAITZ, Anthropologie der Naturvölker, 510.
Wannemuine, fabulous hero of the Estonians, 545.
— grey-bearded at his birth, 546.
Water, the beginning of the world, 245, 247.
'Waters contained a germ,' 247.
Wayfarer, 182 *note*.
Weder, storm, 289.
Weiss and wissen, 285.
Weisse, C. H., 16, 114.
Welcker, 466 *note*.
Welsh, 290.
Wends and Sorbs, dialects of the, 293.
West, the, 123, 124.

Westermann, 16.
Western Hindî, 301.
West-Nordish, Icelandic, and Norwegian, 287.
West-Slavonic, 293.
West-Teutonic, 290.
Whatever is, is right, 113.
Whence and whither, asked only by man, 243, 245.
— why asked? 244.
Whistling language in Gomera, 358.
White, 371.
Wig, 272 *note*.
Will of God, 61, 62.
— or resistance is existence, 119.
Wilson, Professor, 19.
Wind as an active agent, 390.
Windic or Slavonic, 292.
Windischmann, Mithra, 499 *note*.
Winds worshipped in Babylon, 459.
Winidae, 293.
Wit, to, and I wot, 285.
Wodan and Wednesday, 289.
— or Odin, 289.
Wôdnes-dæg, 289.
Wood, ὕλη, materies, 240.
Worded and unworded reason, 352.
Words, public opinion settles the meaning of, 27.
— originally deeds, 281.
— remaining only as symbols, 356.
— we think in, 356.
— never stand for a single percept, 381.
World-controlling Power of Pfleiderer, 57, 61.
Worship, Gruppe's view of, 187 *note*.
Writing, invention of, 50.
— influence of, on religion, 552.
— idea of, familiar in Old Testament, 560.
Wundt's definition of religion, 73.
Wuotan, 488, 489.
Wuttke, 141.

YÂGÑAVALKYA, 111.
Yagur-veda, 185.
Yamaka, or Life after Death, 108.
Yasna, the, 544.
'Yellow with shame,' 179.
Yes, only used by the Polynesians to strangers, 357.
— in Old Irish, 362 *note*.
Yi-king, 546.
Yoga-philosophy, 231 *note*.
— Sûtras, 230 *note*, 231 *note*.
Yogendra Chandra Ghosh, 100 *note*.
Yogins, the, 230, 231.
Yo-heo, 206, 207, 362, 373.
— subdivision of the Pooh-pooh theory, 362.
Yo-heoic theory, 211.

Z, sound of wind heard in, 376.
Zabad, trilingual inscription of, 308.
Zend, 302.
— the ancient dialect of Media, 302.
Zend-avesta, 544.
Zephyros, 169.
— and Vedic Gâhusha, 429.
Zeus, 410.
— and Hera, mere names, 383, 384.
— 'whoever he is,' 384.
— born when Dyaus was first addressed as a masculine, 462.
Ζεύς for Δγεύς, 289.
Zeus Xenios, 532.
Zi, or that which manifests life, 397.
— raised to a higher position, 398.
Zoroaster, 302, 556.
— and Ormazd, 496.
— religion of, 553.
Zoroastrianism, 295.
— sacred books of, 214.
Zweckmässig, 91.

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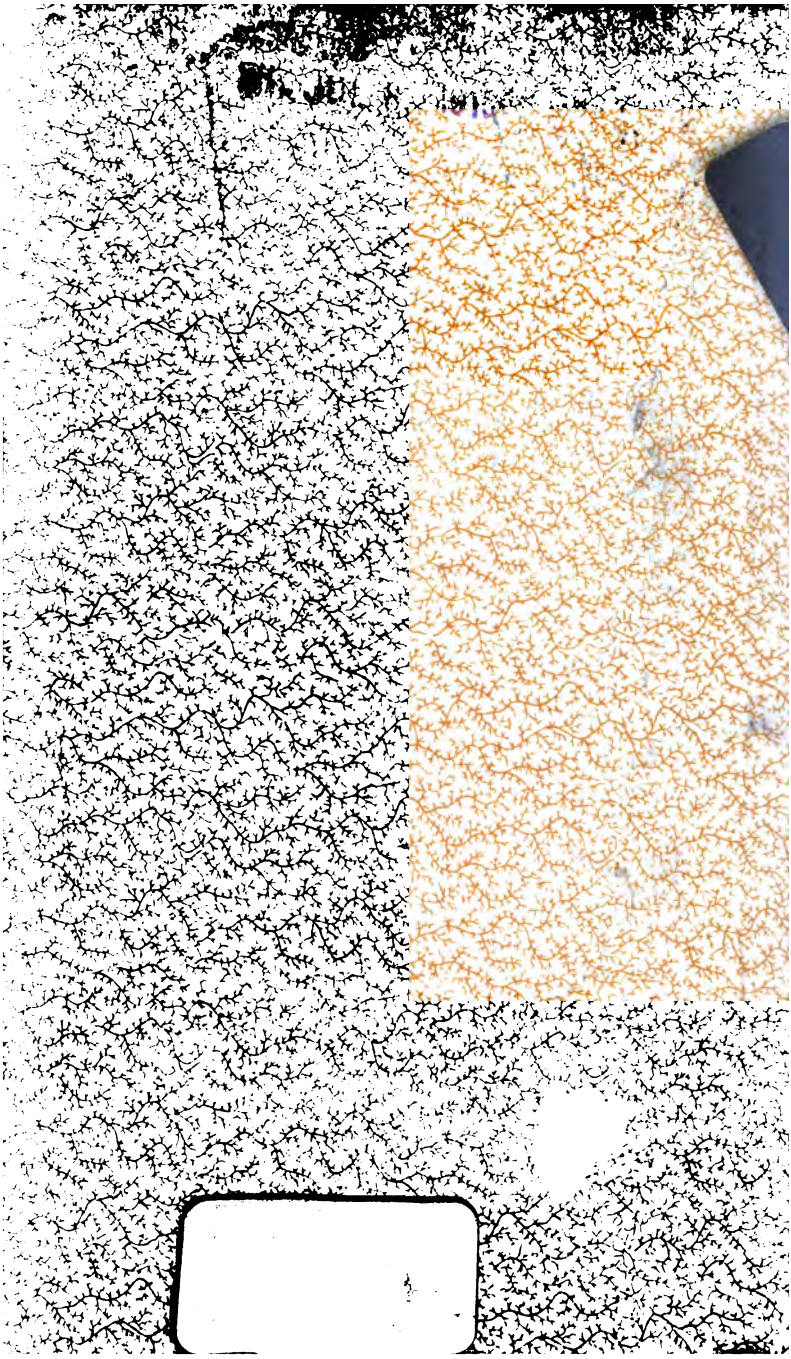

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